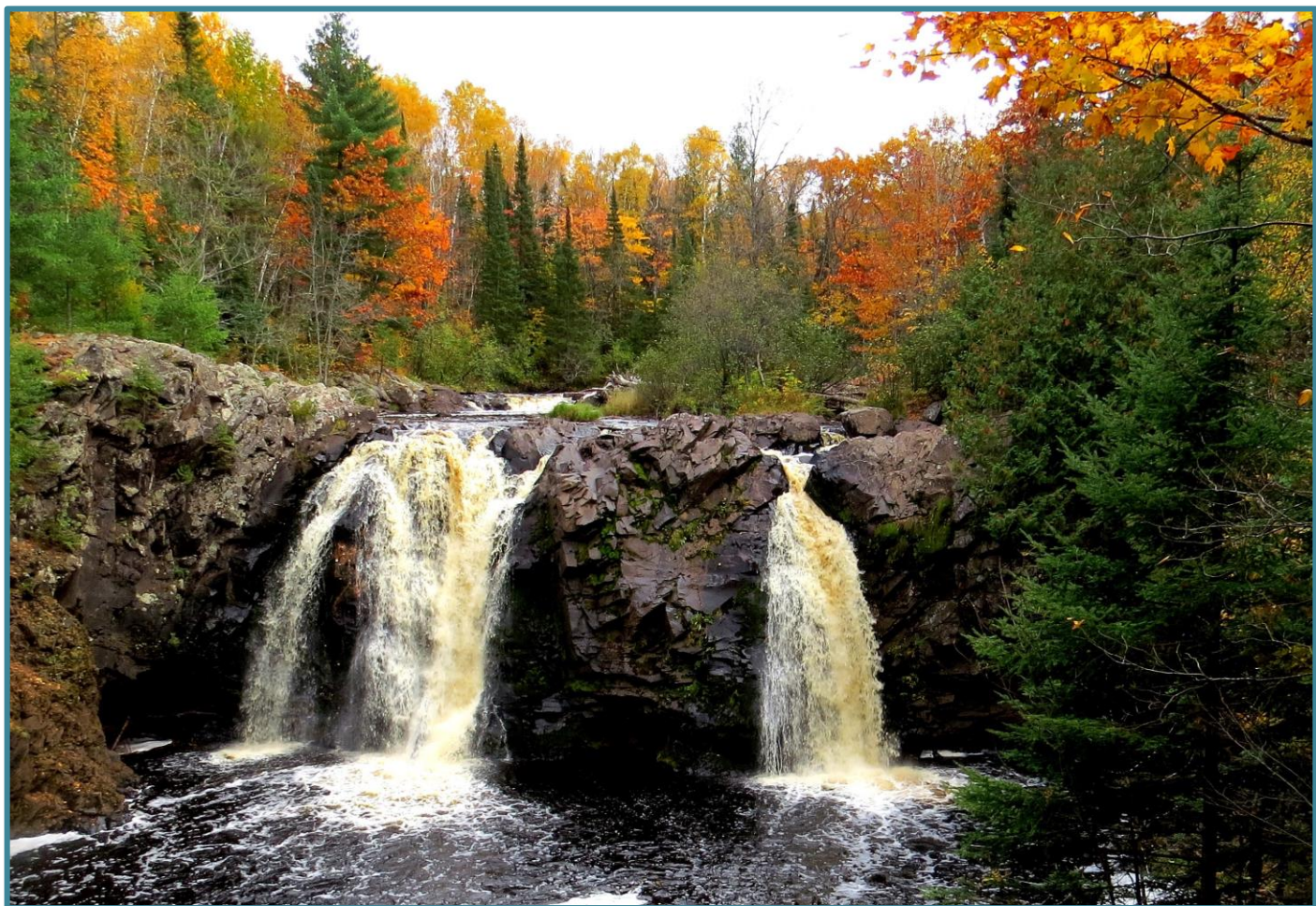


Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan



Proposed Master Plan and Environmental Analysis



February 2019
PUB-LF-112 (2018)

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Acquisition authority: The Legislature authorized the department to acquire and manage land for a variety of conservation and recreation purposes including state forests, parks, wildlife areas, fishery areas, recreation areas, trails, and natural areas (§23.09(2)(d), Wis. Stats.). In addition, the department is authorized to acquire and manage lands and facilities such as forest nurseries, experimental stations, fish hatcheries, and game farms, to support conservation and recreation properties. The Natural Resources Board approves the establishment of department properties for conservation and recreation purposes, which includes a formal name, a designation, an acreage goal and a project boundary (see below) – together these form the acquisition authority. . -approved name or authority (typically the name of a property) under which the department can acquire land.

Acreage goal: The number of acres the department is approved to acquire within a given project boundary.

Administrative Code: The set of rules promulgated by state agencies to interpret and enforce laws (statutes) passed by the Legislature. Rules promulgated by DNR are given the prefix ‘NR’ for ‘natural resource rule’.

All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV): As defined in §340.01(2g) Wis. Stats, a commercially designed and manufactured motor-driven device that has a weight, without fluids, of 900 pounds or less, has a width of 50 inches or less, is equipped with a seat designed to be straddled by the operator and travels on three or more low-pressure or non-pneumatic tires.

Amendment: See ‘Master Plan Amendment’.

Best Management Practice (BMP): An action, or combination of actions, that is determined to be an effective and practicable means of achieving a management objective.

Deed Acres: Acreage derived from DNR Land Record System based off the acquisition deed and described in the legal description. The acres described in a deed often differ by a small amount from the acres calculated using Geographic Information System (GIS) software. See “GIS acres” below.

Ecological Landscapes: Sixteen areas of Wisconsin with different ecological attributes and management opportunities that can be used to identify the best areas of the state to manage for different natural communities, habitats, aquatic features, and native plants and animals from an ecosystem management perspective. The boundaries are substantially based on the National Hierarchical Framework of Ecological Units developed by the U.S. Forest Service, with some subsections combined to produce a manageable number of units.

Ecosystem management: A system of planning, protecting, managing, and restoring ecosystem composition, structure, and function to ensure sustainability across a range of spatial and temporal scales and to provide desired ecological, economic, and social conditions and benefits.

Forest certification: Independent, third-party certification programs that verify that forest management meets strict standards for ecological, social, and economic sustainability. DNR lands are dual certified under Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) standards.

GIS acres: Acreage calculated from DNR spatial datasets using a Geographic Information System (GIS). When applied to DNR Managed Lands, there will usually be slight differences between GIS acres and deed acres due to different methods of collecting and recording parcel geometry.

Habitat classification: Generalizations of cover types from the Wisconsin Field Inventory & Reporting System (WisFIRS) used for property planning.

Handbook: A DNR guidance document that contains procedures, standards, instructions, and techniques on a specific, focused topic.



Land management classifications: Classifications authorized and described in ch. NR 44, Wis. Admin. Code and are applied to a property or management area within a property to describe the general management objective for that area as determined during the master planning process. Land management classifications generally frame the types of land management and public use activities that will be pursued in each management area.

Manual Code: A DNR policy/procedure document. Manual Codes are established to communicate specific procedures that employees need to follow to comply with department policies or Administrative Codes.

Master Plan: A document that describes the authorized resource management, recreation management, and facility development that may take place on a DNR property. Master plans for DNR properties are developed according to the guidelines set forth in Chapter NR 44, Wis. Admin. Code and require approval by the Natural Resources Board. At heart, master plans are “instruction manuals” that describe the property’s vision, goals and objectives, the recreational uses and habitats that will be provided, and the management strategies and techniques that will be used.

Master Plan modifications: In some situations, conditions or opportunities change at properties that result in a need to modify master plans. Chapter NR 44, Wis. Admin. Code provides three methods to change master plans:

Master Plan Revision: A master plan revision process is pursued when there is a need to potentially change property-level goals or objectives. This degree of change nearly always leads to changes in the management purposes and objectives for much of or the entire property. Revisions must be approved by the Natural Resources Board.

Master Plan Amendment: An amendment process is used when proposed modifications include a change to the management objectives for one or a few management areas on a property, but not a change to the overall property’s goals or objectives. In these cases, there is usually a need to change one or more of the “land management classifications” assigned to management areas.

Amendments must be approved by the Natural Resources Board.

Master Plan Variance: A change in management activity or use described in a master plan that is consistent with the area’s land management classification and does not constitute a change in an objective for management or public use of the area as specified in the plan. That is, variances are used when the department seeks to achieve the objectives for a management area in a different or additional way. Examples could include using new habitat management techniques or adding a recreational use to an area. Variances do not entail a change to a property’s land management classifications nor its goals and objectives. A variance may be approved by the DNR Secretary or a Division Administrator.

Natural Community: An assemblage of different plant and animal species living together in a particular area, at a particular time, in a particular habitat, interacting with one another and with the abiotic environment around them, and subject to primarily natural disturbance regimes. Assemblages that are repeated across a landscape in an observable pattern constitute a community type. No two assemblages are exactly alike.

Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI): A methodology and database for collecting, characterizing, storing, and managing data on rare species, natural communities, and natural features throughout the state. Wisconsin’s NHI program is housed in DNR’s Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation.

Natural Resources Board (NRB): The 7-member citizen board that sets policy for the department and exercises authority and responsibility in accordance with governing state laws. The NRB approves all master plans as well as plan revisions and amendments.



NR 44: Chapter in the Wisconsin Administrative Code that authorizes, establishes, and describes the process for developing master plans for DNR properties.

Primary Site: Ecologically important site identified on a department property through a biotic inventory or assessment. Primary Sites are delineated because they encompass the best examples of: rare and representative natural communities; documented occurrences of rare species populations; and/or opportunities for ecological restoration or connections. These sites warrant high protection and/or restoration consideration during the development of property master plans.

Project boundary: Spatial representation of an area (e.g., a property) within which the department has authority to acquire land. A project boundary represents an area of acquisition authority.

Recreation Opportunities Analysis (ROA): A department study of existing outdoor-based recreation opportunities and future recreation needs around the state. The study identifies future needs for providing high-quality recreation experiences and the role of DNR properties in helping meet those needs. The final report can be viewed on the DNR website at dnr.wi.gov, keyword: ROA.

Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN): Wildlife species (including invertebrates, birds, fish, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians) in Wisconsin that are in need of conservation action because they: are already listed as threatened or endangered; are at risk due to threats to their life history needs or habitats; are rare due to declining populations, abundance, and/or distribution; show declining trends in their habitats and populations. SGCN are identified in Wisconsin's Wildlife Action Plan.

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP): A report that periodically evaluates status, trends, demand, and needs for outdoor recreation throughout the state. The SCORP is a primary source of information on outdoor recreation in Wisconsin.

Statutory property designation: The official designation of a property (e.g., State Park, State Wildlife Area, State Forest, State Natural Area, etc.), authorized and defined in Wisconsin Statutes and Administrative Code, that describes what the primary purpose of the property is and, therefore, frames the general scope of land management and public use that can take place there.

Tension Zone: An area of transition between two distinct ecological zones. There is a pronounced tension zone in Wisconsin that runs from northwestern to southeastern Wisconsin, separating the northern forest (including the boreal element) from the southern forest and prairies. . Many species reach the limits of their ranges in this zone.

Utility Terrain Vehicle (UTV): A motor driven device, sometimes referred to as a "side-by-side" designed to be used primarily off-highway that has a net weight of less than 2,000 pounds, four or more low-pressure or non-pneumatic tires. Additionally, the vehicle must have a steering wheel, a tail light, a brake light, two headlights, a width of not more than 65 inches, and a roll bar or similar device designed to reduce the likelihood of injuries as the result of a rollover, all as originally manufactured in accordance with §23.33(1)(ng) Wis. Stats. Golf carts, low-speed vehicles, dune buggies, mini-trucks, homemade, tracked, or modified vehicles are not utility terrain vehicle.

Variance: See 'Master Plan Variance'.

Wildlife Action Plan (WAP): The comprehensive plan for the conservation of rare and declining species and their habitats in the state. The Wisconsin WAP identifies Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) and lays out a strategy to conserve and sustain them and their habitats for future generations.

Wisconsin Environmental Policy Act (WEPA): A state law designed to encourage informed decision-making by state agencies. WEPA requires state agencies to consider the effects of their policies, plans, programs, and actions on the



quality of the human environment. WEPA created Chapter 1.11, Wisconsin Statutes. DNR's WEPA responsibilities are further described in Chapter NR 150, Wisconsin Administrative Code.

Wisconsin Field Inventory and Reporting System (WisFIRS): A database and web-based application used by DNR staff to store habitat data collected in the field, and to plan for and track vegetation management practices.



COMMONLY USED ACRONYMS

ATV	All-terrain vehicle
BMP	Best Management Practices
CTH	County Highway
DNR	Department of Natural Resources
EL	Ecological Landscape
NHI	Natural Heritage Inventory
NR 44	Chapter NR 44, Wisconsin Administrative Code, Master Planning for Department Properties
NRB	Natural Resources Board
OHM	Off-highway motorcycle
PILT	Payment in lieu of taxes
SCORP	Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
SGCN	Species of Greatest Conservation Need
SNA	State Natural Area
STH	State Highway
UTV	Utility Terrain Vehicle
WisFIRS	Wisconsin Field Inventory and Reporting System
ROA	Recreation Opportunity Analysis

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Chapter 1 : Overview of Plan and Properties

PURPOSE AND MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

The purpose of this master plan is to guide management of department properties in the Superior Coastal Plain region of Wisconsin. A master plan establishes the levels and types of public uses that are permitted on a property as well as the authorized resource management and facility development that will take place on the property. Master plans are developed according to guidelines set forth in Wisconsin Administrative Code Chapter NR 44. The formation of master plans benefits the public and the department by clearly defining management of the public resource and ensuring management follows a defined track, regardless of staff changes. As a result of this plan, the DNR properties in this region shall continue to provide high-quality natural resources, recreational experiences and sustainable timber resources for present and future generations.

This regional plan builds upon the substantial foundation laid by previous master plans, wildlife and fisheries program guidance and biotic inventories conducted over the last several decades. The planning process considers comments received during public meetings and public comment periods, including involvement of partner agencies and interest from local officials.

THE REGION: SUPERIOR COASTAL PLAIN ECOLOGICAL LANDSCAPE

The Superior Coastal Plain Ecological Landscape primarily intersects Douglas, Bayfield and Ashland counties, with a small portion also intersecting Iron county. Descriptions of natural resources, socio-economic characteristics and recreational resources for this region are provided in extensive detail in Chapter 21 of the Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin (WDNR, 2015b). All chapters of this reference compendium are accessible on the Wisconsin DNR website (dnr.wi.gov) keywords “Ecological Landscapes” then “Superior Coastal Plain”. A summary of the natural resources, socio-economic characteristics, and recreational resource opportunities of the Superior Coastal Plain is provided in Chapter 3 of this document.



Figure 1.1. The Superior Coastal Plain ecological landscape (highlighted). The landscape forms the basis for the planning region.

ECOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SUPERIOR COASTAL PLAIN

The Superior Coastal Plain, defined by the Lake Superior coastline and the red-clay plain and associated wetlands that occur across the landscape, is an ecologically rich region. The Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan has identified nine Conservation Opportunity Areas within the region. The Lake Superior shoreline, including its unique coastal estuaries and river corridors, and the Apostle Islands are considered globally significant conservation areas. The red clay wetlands and Boreal Forests of the Superior Coastal Plain are significant to conservation both in Wisconsin and throughout North America. These distinctive landscape features play a critical role in maintaining Wisconsin's unique biological diversity.

LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Lake Superior Coastal habitats
- Apostle Islands
- Freshwater Estuaries (St. Louis, Bad/Kakagon, Big Bay, Port Wing, Bark, Raspberry)
- River Corridors, including cliffs, ledges, & falls
- Red Clay Wetlands
- Boreal Forest
- Migratory Bird Concentration Areas

The soil of the Superior Coastal Plain is unique to this ecological landscape within Wisconsin. These poorly-drained reddish lacustrine clays are especially erosion-prone when cut by streams and exist on both sides of the Bayfield Peninsula. In contrast, the Bayfield Peninsula has a variety of clays, silts, loams, and sands. Organic soils in this region are rare and are limited to peatlands on the margins of coastal lagoons.

These soils give context to the historic vegetation and composition of the Boreal Forests, which were characterized by older forests and conifers such as eastern hemlock, eastern white pine, white spruce, balsam fir, and northern white cedar. These forests no longer exist in the same magnitude, having been greatly reduced in the Great Cutover, the period of harvesting and slash fires of the late 1800s and early 1900s.

Many forests now are relatively young and dominated by aspen and maple. Current land cover lacks the significance of previously extensive forests; approximately 57% is classified as timberland, with aspen and birch forests managed for pulp, which have increased in prominence over the formerly dominant boreal conifers. Second growth northern hardwood forests are interspersed. Some of the deep stream valleys contain important refugia for vegetation not directly affected by the Great Cutover. Small but exceptional stands of old-growth forest occur on the Apostle Islands.

Deforestation has led to severe spring flooding during and following snowmelt, exacerbated by the clay soils. Flooding in many watersheds has increased due to the increased acres of open land, rate and timing of snowmelt and the greater overall quantity of water reaching streams, both during snowmelt and summer storms. Agencies and landowners are making efforts toward reforestation to “slow the flow” of snowmelt and stormwater runoff.

Rock cliffs and shores, coastal estuaries, fens, bogs, ridge and swale complexes, beaches and dunes, and Boreal Forests are part of the Superior Coastal Plain's array of distinctive habitats and support abundant wildlife. Many (81) rare plant species occur here, including 16 known only to this landscape and five that are globally rare. The charismatic American marten, spruce grouse, boreal owls and moose are among the 62 rare animal species that occur in the region. Superior Coastal Plain habitats also provide critical nesting, feeding, and resting areas for a wide variety of migratory waterfowl, songbirds, shorebirds and raptors. Islands near the Lake Superior shores host

enormous rookeries of terns, herons, and gulls; while scattered old, grassy fields and pastures on the mainland have populations of rare grassland birds.

Cooler temperatures and the length of time for the heavy soils to warm in spring limit agriculture to dairy, beef, or poultry. The growing season is generally too short for row crops. Specialty crops such as apples and berries are grown on the Bayfield Peninsula, due to its soil and longer growing season, owed to the moderating effects of Lake Superior.

Lake Superior supports an important sport fishery for lake trout, coho salmon, lake whitefish, brown trout, lake herring, and rainbow smelt, with walleye, smallmouth bass, northern pike, and yellow perch in the shallower bays. Lake Superior tributaries are important spawning areas for trout and salmon.

RECREATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SUPERIOR COASTAL PLAIN

Lake Superior, its shoreline and tributaries provide the foundation of much of the recreation in this part of the state. Fishing, boating and sailing are popular summertime pursuits, while snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, and ice fishing draw visitors in the winter. The Apostle Islands and the waterfalls of the region are also large draws. Touring the region via motor vehicle or bicycle is a popular activity that brings visitors from around the United States and beyond.

Traditional nature-based activities such as hunting, fishing, trapping and hiking are activities with high participation rates in this part of the state. DNR properties and other public lands offer plentiful opportunities for these pursuits. Hunting takes place on most DNR properties. The region offers a full gamut of fishing opportunities – from coldwater stream trout fishing, to smallmouth bass in Chequamegon Bay and lake trout in the open waters of the world's largest lake. Most department properties in the region host hiking trails and all are open to foot travel throughout the property. The North Country National Scenic Trail (NCT) crosses through this region as part of its over 4,000-mile path from North Dakota to New York state. Pattison State Park and Copper Falls State Park have camping opportunities along the NCT for those making the long haul.

Canoeing and kayaking opportunities are also plentiful and diverse, with opportunities ranging from small stream paddling to sea kayaking the Apostle Islands. Bicycling (road, mountain and winter fat tire), is pursued year-round. DNR properties host boat launches and bike trails to facilitate these recreational pursuits.

TRIBAL RESOURCES ON CEDED TERRITORY

The Superior Coastal Plain properties lie within the Ceded Territory of the state. The Red Cliff and Bad River tribes are both within the Superior Coastal Plain ecological landscape.

Native American tribes are independent, sovereign nations, as they were prior to the arrival of Europeans in North America. The Ojibwa Tribes ceded lands in the northern one-third of Wisconsin to the United States government in the Treaties of 1837 and 1842. In those Treaties, they reserved their rights to hunt, trap, fish and gather within various publicly-owned lands.

Treaty rights are currently being exercised and implemented by the Ojibwe Tribes within the Ceded Territory.

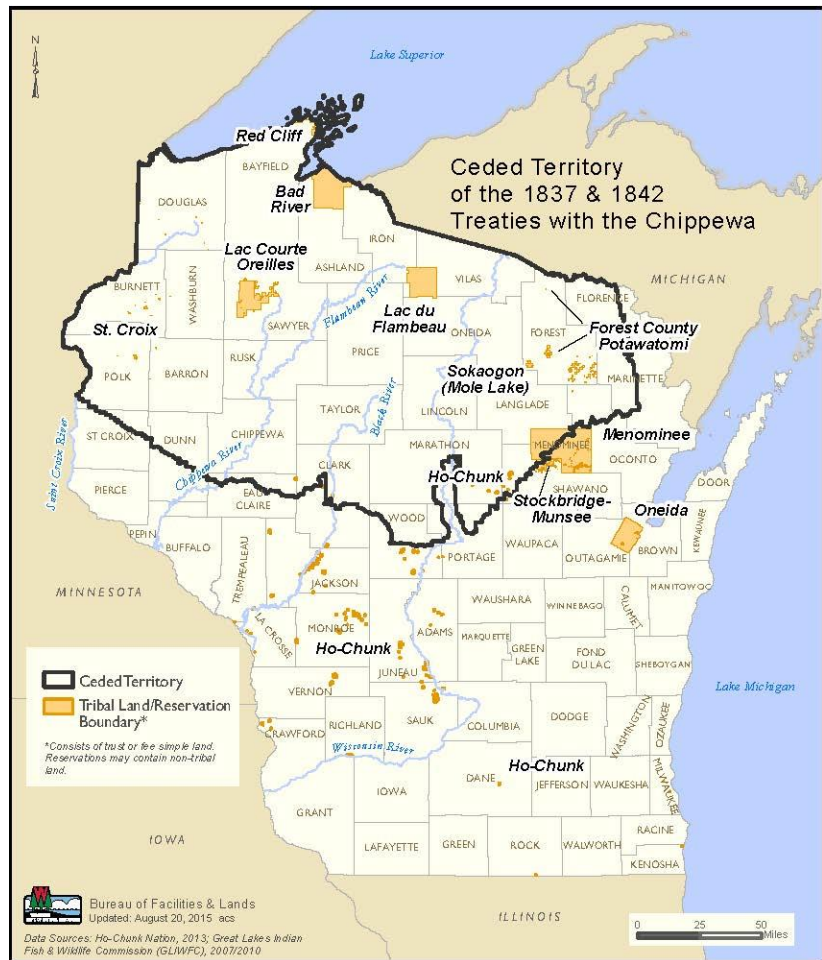


Figure 1.2. Ceded Territory of the 1837 and 1842 Treaties.

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROPERTIES

The region's natural resources and recreational opportunities are major tourism draws. Tourism is a large industry in the region and local economies benefit from the dollars brought in by those sharing in the enjoyment of the region's resources. DNR properties in this plan host many of the region's most popular areas to visit while protecting the region's resources. The Superior Coastal Regional Master Plan contains approximately 53,318 acres of department managed lands. The properties consist of state parks, wildlife areas, fishery areas, state natural areas, state public access sites, state habitat areas and state-owned islands. Properties with boundaries in more than one ecological landscape planning region are generally assigned to the planning region for which most of their acreage resides. Although a large portion of Brule River State Forest occurs within the Superior Coastal Plain region, the majority of its acreage is in the Northwest Sands region. Therefore, it is incorporated in the Northwest Sands Regional Master Plan.

An overview of the Superior Coastal Plain properties is provided in Table 1.1. For an exhaustive list of properties in this regional master plan, please see Appendix A. Several of the properties in the Superior Coastal Plain region have

previously approved NR 44-compliant master plans. Properties with NR 44-compliant plans are denoted in Table 1.1 with an asterisk and are incorporated into this master plan. Upon approval of this regional plan, all properties noted in Table 1.1 and Appendix A will be unified in one regional master plan.

Table 1.1. Overview of Properties of the Superior Coastal Plain

Property Name	County	Deed Acres
Amnicon Falls State Park	Douglas	826
Bark Bay Slough State Natural Area	Bayfield	638
Bibon Swamp State Natural Area*	Bayfield	9,747
Big Bay State Park	Ashland	2,517
Copper Falls State Park	Ashland	3,543
Lost Creek Bog State Natural Area	Bayfield	863
Nourse Sugarbush State Natural Area	Bayfield	483
Pattison State Park	Douglas	1,521
Pokegema-Carnegie Wetland State Natural Area	Douglas	296
Port Wing Boreal Forest State Natural Area	Bayfield	269
South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area**	Bayfield	8,033
St Louis River Streambank Protection Area	Douglas	6,863
White River Fishery Area*	Bayfield	4,441
White River Wildlife Area*	Ashland	1,282

*Property with existing NR 44-compliant plan

**Proposed property name. Currently, this property is named the South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area.

Chapter 2 : Property Management, Development and Use

SUPERIOR COASTAL PLAIN – VISION FOR THE PROPERTIES

The Superior Coastal Plain properties are a vital contributor to the preservation of boreal forests, coastal wetlands, and cold-water tributaries in the Superior Coastal Plain Ecological Landscape. This landscape plays a key role in enhancing and protecting the unique water resources of Lake Superior, the largest freshwater lake on Earth. Recreational opportunities provided by department properties include unique Lake Superior coastal scenery and recreational pursuits, abundant watercraft uses, camping, multiple trail uses, hunting, fishing, trapping, gathering, wildlife watching and educational opportunities. The abundance and diversity of natural resources, such as the large northern game and rare bird species that inhabit this landscape, attracts visitors who appreciate not only wildlife, but also the grand scale of landforms including waterfalls, rock outcrops and the red-clay wetlands and coastal estuaries of this Great Lake coastal region.

Recreational opportunities on these properties and in this landscape, are supported in part by community, regional and government partnerships that support wildlife and sustainable habitat management for current and future generations.

GOALS

- Provide opportunities for hunting, trapping, fishing, wild edibles gathering, wildlife viewing, scenic enjoyment, nature study and trail-based recreational uses that are compatible with the properties' capabilities, and regional habitat and recreation goals.
- Restore, manage and perpetuate the major natural community habitats that support an intact Superior Coastal Plain Ecological Landscape, using principles of ecosystem management and sustainable forestry.
- Protect the Lake Superior shoreline and its tributary streams through sound property and watershed management practices. Provide habitat for the high number of migratory birds that are dependent on Lake Superior's coastal communities, and for wildlife associated with inland wetlands and rivers.
- Manage in ways that contribute to the protection and preservation of the Outstanding and Exceptional Resource Waters, wetlands, lakes, and the state and national Wild Rivers in this landscape.
- Maintain and enhance ecological connectivity between natural community habitats and, on a landscape scale, promote their sustainability in partnership with nearby private, town, county, state, federal and tribal land managers.
- Contribute to the local and regional economies through management of sustainable recreational opportunities, and sustainably produced forest products.

PROPERTIES OF THE SUPERIOR COASTAL PLAIN AND THEIR MANAGEMENT

The properties of the Superior Coastal Plain are state parks, a stream bank protection area, and state fishery and habitat areas along with state-owned islands, state public access sites and state spring ponds. Three properties with existing NR 44-compliant master plans are incorporated into this regional plan. The Brule River State Forest, while partially within the Superior Coastal Plain, is incorporated into the Northwest Sands Regional Master Plan. Appendix A includes a complete listing of properties in the Superior Coastal Plain and denotes those plans with existing NR 44-compliant plans. These are plans the department completed during planning processes that took place prior to the



planning for the rest of the Superior Coastal Plain region. The land management classifications, land uses and management were all considered during this planning process. The existing NR 44 compliant plans will now be on the same update schedule as this region-wide plan to ensure consistency in regional planning.

PROPERTY MAPS


Property maps in this plan are found primarily housed in the online DNR Property Planning Viewer. Links to the five different map types (DNR and Other Lands, Recreation, Roads, Land Cover and Land Management Classification) can be found in Table A.1 and in many of the property sections. To access mapping data for properties without using the links in Table A.1 or the property section of this plan, follow these three steps:

1. Open the Property Planning Viewer

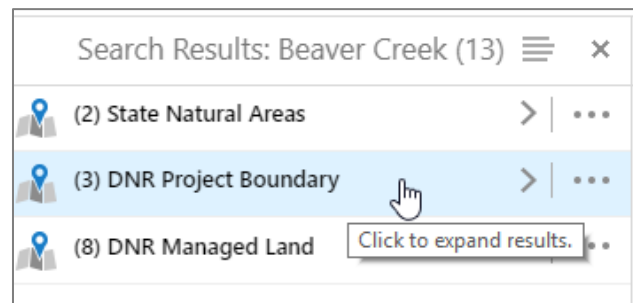
Visit the [Property Planning Viewer home page](#) and click the  button.

2. Locate the property you want to view

Enter the name of the property in the Search bar in the upper right corner of the viewer. Correct spelling is necessary, but entering the entire name is not necessary.

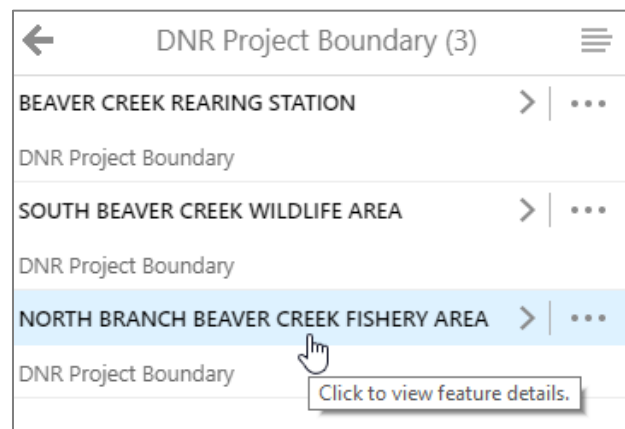
Beaver Creek 

Matching records appear in the Search Results pane. In this example, a search for “Beaver Creek” returns two State Natural Areas, three DNR Project Boundaries, and eight features for DNR Managed Lands.



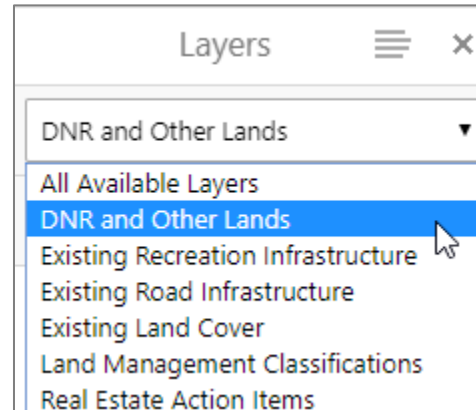
Click on the type of feature you want. In most cases, this will be DNR Project Boundary.

Finally, click the name of the property you want to view and the map will automatically zoom to that property.

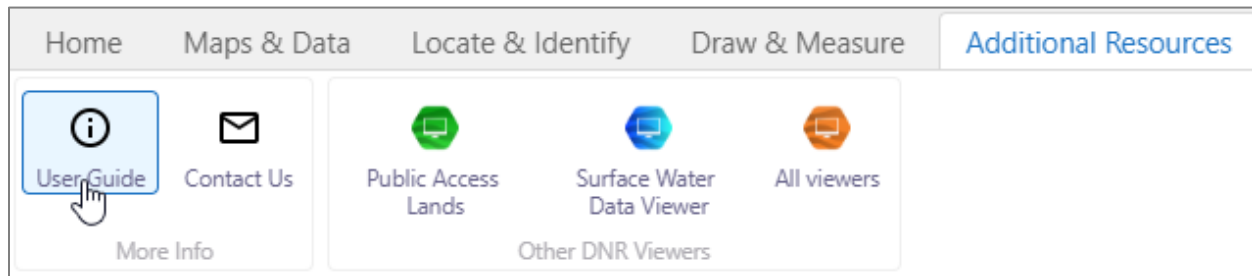


3. Choose a map theme

The default map theme is DNR and Other Lands. To view a different map theme, select it from the Layers drop down menu.



To learn more about additional capabilities of the Property Planning Viewer, click the User Guide button on the Additional Resources tab.



PDF maps have also been prepared for properties with more than one land management classification proposed in this plan. These properties include the four state parks, South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area and the St Louis River Streambank Protection Area. These are located on the Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan website, under the maps tab. Real Estate Action Items are also located on this website.

LAND MANAGEMENT CLASSIFICATIONS

All department lands must be assigned a land management classification per NR 44. These classifications for a property or management area within a property are determined during the master planning process. Management areas and their classifications defined in this plan are mapped to project boundaries. This ensures parcels purchased within a project boundary after this plan's approval have management objectives assigned. Those properties purchased after this plan's approval and falling outside a management area will be assigned a land management classification following the process described in NR 44. DNR properties within the Superior Coastal Plain having new land management classifications assigned in this plan have been assigned the following land management classifications:

Habitat Management Area (HMA) (NR 44.06(5)): The primary objective for HMAs is to provide integrated upland, wetland and/or aquatic habitat management that meets critical life-cycle needs for a variety of plant and animal species. Typically, the emphasis is to provide habitats needed to sustain productive game species populations. Areas that initially do not have desired habitat conditions but have a high potential to be restored may be included under this classification.



Native Community Management Area (NCMA) (NR 44.06(6)): NCMA's are managed to perpetuate pre-settlement plant and animal communities, whether upland, wetland, or aquatic, and protect the biological diversity of the native ecosystems. A native community is a distinct and reoccurring assemblage of indigenous flora and fauna associated with a particular set of physical characteristics. Areas that initially do not have the desired community conditions but have a reasonable potential to be restored may be included in this classification. All traditional recreational uses, such as hunting, fishing, trapping, and nature enjoyment, are allowed on NCMA's unless an area needs to be closed to protect a rare species during breeding season or to protect a very fragile habitat.

Recreation Management Area (RMA) (NR 44.06(8)) with Type 2, 3 and 4 Recreational Use Settings: Lands in this classification are managed to provide and maintain land and water areas and facilities for outdoor public recreation and education.

Special Management Area (SMA) (NR 44.06(7)): Lands in this classification are managed to provide and maintain areas or facilities for special uses not included under other land management classifications.

Scenic Resources Management Area (SRMA) (NR 44.06(9)): Scenic resources management areas protect, maintain and enhance for long-term public enjoyment lands or waters having unique aesthetic qualities or outstanding scenic beauty and lands where managing for aesthetics is a primary concern due to significant or special public use of the area.

The total acres of each land management classification assigned in this plan and in previously created NR 44 plans referenced in this plan are shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1. Planned Land Management Classifications Acres

Land Management Classification	Total Newly Planned GIS Acres	Total Existing NR 44 Plan Acres
Habitat Management Area	17,570	3,652
Forest Production Management Area	0	0
Native Community Management Area	14,024	16,904
Recreation Management Area	8,167	0
Scenic Resources Management Area	243	5,162
Special Management Area	26	0

FOREST CERTIFICATION

The management classifications listed in Table 2.1 reflect that all DNR-managed lands, including state parks, fishery areas, wildlife areas and natural areas have been audited by an independent third party to the Forest Stewardship Council® and Sustainable Forestry Initiative® forest management standards (license codes FSC®C006979 and SFI®-



00059) and are recognized as being well managed. These certifications emphasize the state's commitment to responsible management and conservation of its forestlands that support economic activities, protect wildlife habitat, and provide recreational opportunities

HABITAT CLASSIFICATIONS

Property land cover is present in most property-specific sections of this plan through a tiered habitat classification system. Smaller properties such as state-owned islands and public access sites may not have exact habitat classifications identified. Land cover given is applicable to forest certification. Habitat classifications in property section land cover tables are derived from an aerial/tree-top forestry perspective. They are an umbrella under which more detailed forestry and native plant community land covers are subdivided yet again. Fifteen potential classifications provide a general overview. These mask finer details included in ecological community descriptions (E.g. a bog or fen becomes a generic wetland type). Chapter 3 details regional and property-specific natural community descriptions for properties in this plan and based on inventories of plant and animal communities; thereby giving the "ground up" perspective.

Some of the detail masked in the broader habitat classifications is also shown as WisFIRS cover types in each table. The plan lists representative WisFIRS cover types, but potentially not all cover types for a property, to indicate which Common Elements for habitat type (as shown in Table 2.2) might be applicable to a given property. All Common Elements apply to all properties, unless otherwise noted. However, by giving representative WisFIRS types, property managers and the public can better understand which Common Elements are most relevant. On any property, including smaller properties that do not have a habitat classifications table in this plan, property managers may refer to WisFIRS when planning property management to gain a more detailed understanding of the property's land cover.

COMMON MANAGEMENT FOR ALL PROPERTIES

Common Elements Overview

DNR properties, while diverse in the resources they offer, are governed under the same state statutes, administrative codes and processes, and share many standard practices for habitat and property management. Given this, the department has developed a set of Common Elements, procedures commonly used by the department that apply broadly to many situations addressed in master plans. Common Elements apply to all properties, unless otherwise noted in the individual property's management plan.

Common Elements for DNR Property Management

Common Elements are grouped into three categories:

Master Planning Process

The Master Planning Process Common Element provides an overview of how the department conducts planning, including phases in the process, variances and amendments, and public involvement.

Components of Master Plans

The Components of Master Plans Common Elements are divided into four major categories: general property management practices, real estate management practices, habitats and their management, and recreation facilities and the management. These describe most of the common DNR practices for managing department lands.



Background and Supporting Information

The Background and Supporting Information Common Elements contain references, definitions, and other supporting information used during the planning process.

All Common Elements are based on existing department codes, policies, handbooks, and common practices. General property management, recreation management, and real estate management practices are similar on all properties, no matter their resources. Habitat management on any given property varies widely given the variety of resource situations that might be present.

Table 2.2 shows the Habitat Management Common Elements applicable to a property when a habitat classification is present. It also shows Common Elements available for general habitat management categories, taxa-specific management, and management practices.

Table 2.2. Habitat Management Common Elements for the Superior Coastal Plain

Type	Common Element Documents Available	
Habitat Classifications and Associated Common Elements		
Farmland	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Farmland	
Forested Wetland	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Black SpruceBottomland HardwoodsEphemeral PondForested Seep	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Swamp HardwoodsTamarackWhite Cedar
Open Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Coldwater StreamsImpoundments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">LakesWarm water Streams
Open Wetland-Marsh	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Emergent WetlandMuskeg Open Bog	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sedge Meadow
Shrub Wetland	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Wetland Shrub Alder	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Wetland Shrub Dogwood
Shrub Savanna	<ul style="list-style-type: none">BarrensOak Savanna	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Upland Shrub
Upland Broad-Leaved Deciduous Forest	<ul style="list-style-type: none">AspenNorthern Hardwoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Oak and Oak Dominated Mixed ForestRed MapleWhite Birch
Upland Coniferous Forest	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Balsam Fir White SpruceConifer PlantationJack Pine	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Red PineWhite Pine
Upland Grass	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Prairie	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Surrogate Grasslands
General Habitat Management		
General Habitat Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">General Fisheries ManagementGeneral Forest Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">General Wildlife Habitat Management
Taxa-Specific Habitat Management		
Taxa-Specific	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Bat HibernaculaHerptile HibernaculaMigratory Bird Stopover	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Mussel HabitatTurtle Nesting Site
Practices		
Terrestrial Habitat Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">ClearcutCoppiceDirect Seeding and PlantingFarming PracticesGrazingGroup SelectionIntermediate TreatmentMowing, Brushing & HayingOverstory Removal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Passive ManagementPatch SelectionPesticide TreatmentsPrescribed FireSeed TreeShelterwoodSingle Tree SelectionSite Preparation
Aquatic Habitat Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fish PassageInstream PracticesLake Aeration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Streambank PracticesWater Level Manipulation

EXAMPLE USE OF COMMON ELEMENTS

A sample step by step use for Table 2.2, is as follows:

1. Badger State Wildlife Area land cover table (Table 2.3) shows upland grass is present. Property management for the Badger State Wildlife Area in this plan states Common Elements for Habitats and their Management apply to the property. The property manager references Table 2.2.
2. Table 2.2 shows Prairie and Surrogate Grasslands Common Elements are available for the Upland Grass Habitat Classification. The property manager, using her knowledge of the property and DNR land cover databases, knows surrogate grasslands are present on the property.
3. The property manager then accesses the DNR Property Planning website and views the Surrogate Grassland Common Element. The Surrogate Grassland Common Element describes authorized management for surrogate grasslands.
4. Since the property plan stated Habitats and their Management Common Elements applied to the property, all management considerations and practices described in the Surrogate Grassland Common Element are authorized – unless noted otherwise in the property plan section.
5. The property manager may then implement the management for surrogate grasslands following the Surrogate Grassland Common Element and any applicable property-specific objectives and prescriptions.

The land cover table for any property or management area shows Habitat Classifications. On larger properties, the land cover table may also show representative WisFIRS cover types (as Table 2.3 does). Either can be used for identifying the applicable Common Elements. State-owned Islands, State Public Access sites and other smaller DNR properties may not have land cover tables included in the property section of the plan. If a land cover table is not present in the property section, and the property management described includes Habitats and their Management Common Elements, the property manager should use WisFIRS to determine land cover and applicable Common Elements.

Table 2.2 shows all Common Elements applicable to each Habitat Classification. Only those Common Elements for Habitats and their Management associated with the habitat classifications present on a property are authorized. Returning to the Badger State Wildlife Area example, because the Upland Grass habitat classification is present, and Table 2.2 shows both Prairie and Surrogate Grassland Common Elements, both are authorized for use. As are any Common Elements shown in Table 2.2 as associated with Upland Broad-Leaved Deciduous Forest or Shrub Wetland. However, the Barrens, Oak Savanna and Upland Shrub Common Elements are not, because the Shrub Savanna habitat classification is not present on the property.

Table 2.3. Example Property Land Cover Table

Badger State Wildlife Area			
Habitat Classification	Acres	% Cover	Representative WisFIRS Cover Types
Upland Broad-Leaved Deciduous Forest	100	50	Aspen, Northern Hardwoods
Upland Grass	50	25	Surrogate Grassland
Shrub Wetland	50	25	Alder

ROAD MANAGEMENT AND VEHICLE ACCESS

Access to and within DNR properties is on a variety of roads including state and county highways, town roads and DNR managed roads. Roads managed by other governmental units, including townships, counties and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, are outside the scope of this regional master plan. The properties have a network of developed roads and parking lots or areas used for management purposes and public access.

These management and public access roads provide access for managing timber, improving fish and wildlife habitat, fighting fires, recreation among other important activities that take place on department lands. Management roads closed to public vehicles are gated or signed.

Department roads that are not open to public vehicles typically are maintained as primitive or lightly developed road standards and provide access for management vehicles and equipment as well as are foot-access-ways for hunters and hikers.

On primitive roads, which are often used only seasonally and are not regularly maintained, ruts and downed trees may be present. Maintenance is completed on primitive roads as needed. Public access roads managed by the department generally are constructed and maintained as either lightly developed or moderately developed roads. The property manager may determine which of these road standards to apply on a case by case basis.

The Existing Road Infrastructure theme within the DNR Property Planning Viewer shows the current DNR managed road network on each property.

Properties that do not show roads have no DNR managed roads inventoried. Roads open to public vehicles and those closed are both shown. No change in the open or closed status of the roads shown is proposed in this plan.

The following road management and objectives should be applied to properties in the Superior Coastal Plain.

Classifications of DNR managed roads defined

The roads managed by the department fall into four different development level classifications. The classifications reflect a range of development and maintenance standards. Most roads are primitive, lightly or moderately developed.

The road classifications are defined by NR44.07(3) and are as follows:

Primitive road: A primitive road shall be a temporary road, a permanent seasonal road or a permanent all-season road which is primarily a single lane with a maximum sustained cleared width normally not exceeding 12 feet, it has no or little grading, with limited cut and fill, is surfaced with primitive or native materials and has a maximum speed design of 15 mph. Due to the variability of roadbed conditions at different times and places, some primitive roads might not be negotiable by ordinary highway vehicles.

Lightly developed road: A lightly developed road shall be a temporary road, a permanent seasonal road or a permanent all-season road which is primarily a single lane with a maximum sustained cleared width normally not exceeding 16 feet, is lightly to well-graded with minimal cut and fill, is surfaced with primitive, native or aggregate materials except in limited special use situations where asphalt may be used, and has a maximum speed design of 15 mph. Due to the variability of roadbed conditions at different times and places, some lightly developed roads might not be negotiable by ordinary highway vehicles.

Moderately developed road: A moderately developed road shall be a permanent seasonal road or a permanent all-season road which typically is 2-lane, but may be one-lane, have a maximum sustained cleared width normally not exceeding 45 feet for 2-lane and 30 feet for one-lane, a well-graded roadbed and may have moderate cuts and fills and shallow ditching, has a surface of aggregate, asphalt or native material, and a maximum design speed of 25 mph.

Fully developed road: A fully developed road shall be a permanent all-season road with a cleared width normally of 50 feet or more, a roadbed with cuts and fills as needed, an aggregate, asphalt or other paved surface and be designed for speeds exceeding 25 mph.

Road Management Objective

- Provide a network of roads and parking lots or areas within the properties that meet land management and recreational access objectives, while minimizing environmental impacts and management costs.

Management Prescriptions

- Maintain the network of roads shown in the Existing Road Infrastructure theme within the online DNR Property Planning Viewer for properties within the Superior Coastal Plain at their designated development level.
- Maintain designated public access roads and parking lots or areas as open for public use as shown in the Existing Road Infrastructure theme of the DNR Property Planning Viewer. Roads shown as open seasonally may be closed based on season (i.e. not maintained in winter) or be open for specific time periods, such as fall hunting seasons. Time periods during which seasonal roads are open or closed are determined by the property manager.
- Maintain permanent roads in a sustainable condition following the standard road management protocols in the Property Access Common Element.

As public access and department management needs demand, change road development levels and public use status through the master plan variance process set in NR 44.04(4) Wis. Adm. Code.

GENERAL RECREATION MANAGEMENT AND USES

All department-owned lands within the Superior Coastal Plain are open to traditional outdoor recreational uses including hunting, fishing, and trapping, except in refuges as posted. Other activities allowed on these lands include wildlife viewing, photography, hiking, paddling, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, collection of wild edibles, and nature study. Edible fruits and nuts, wild mushrooms, wild asparagus, and watercress may be removed by hand without a permit for personal consumption by the collector. However, collection of seeds, roots, or other plant parts is prohibited. Individual properties may offer additional recreational opportunities such as motorized or nonmotorized trail activities or camping. Details on additional recreational offerings can be found within individual property sections of this plan.

Foot travel (including skiing and snowshoeing) is allowed on all department lands, service roads, dikes, berms, and firebreaks unless otherwise noted. Areas closed to foot travel may include wildlife refuges, closed easements, or areas temporarily restricted during habitat management activities, such as timber cutting or prescribed burns, due to safety concerns.

Motorized vehicle access is available on designated public access roads and parking areas. Snowmobiles and ATVs/UTVs are allowed only on trails and routes designated for their use. Allowances exist for motorized use by individuals with mobility impairments under the power-driven mobility device regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act. For more information on these allowances, please refer to the 'Disabled Accessibility' paragraphs in the Property Access Common Element. Information on rules governing public use of department-owned lands is found in Chapter NR 45, Wisconsin Administrative Code.

The following management priorities and protocols apply to all properties in this regional master plan. If property-specific management objectives and prescriptions described in this document conflicts with these management priorities and protocols, the property-specific management take precedence.



GENERAL RECREATION AND PUBLIC USE PRIORITIES

- Provide opportunities for high-quality nature-based recreational activities as appropriate to and compatible with property designations and capabilities.
- Provide accessibility for mobility-impaired individuals where feasible and seek to identify opportunities to improve accessibility at existing facilities.

GENERAL RECREATION AND PUBLIC USE PROTOCOLS

- Install, maintain, and monitor parking areas, access roads, boat access sites, and signage consistent with department rules and policies, and as appropriate to the property designation.
- Look for opportunities to enhance accessibility of current facilities and provide new accessible facilities as feasible and appropriate to the property designation.

Additional property-specific public use management prescriptions are included in the individual property sections of this chapter.

STATE PARKS OF THE SUPERIOR COASTAL PLAIN

The Superior Coastal Plain region contains four state parks. Each park is unique in the recreational opportunities it provides and the resources it protects.

- Amnicon Falls State Park showcases the waterfalls of the Amnicon River and the historic Horton Covered Bridge, making this park a popular photography destination.
- Big Bay State Park sits on Madeline Island and provides stunning views of Lake Superior from the island, or from a canoe or kayak launched from its 1.5-mile sandy beach. The park also protects a unique wetland in the Big Bay Bog and Sand Spit State Natural Area, which is completely contained within the park.
- Copper Falls State Park, near the City of Mellen, features the gushing waterfalls of the Bad and Tyler Forks Rivers, while providing historical educational experiences through its place on the National Register of Historical Places.
- Pattison State Park is home to Wisconsin's largest waterfall, Big Manitou Falls. The park also contains several other waterfalls and a variety of varied terrain hiking opportunities.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT FOR ALL STATE PARKS IN THE SUPERIOR COASTAL PLAIN

All Wisconsin State Park System (WSPS) properties carry a common purpose:

"To protect and enhance the natural and cultural resources of our Wisconsin State Park System properties while providing high quality recreational and educational opportunities and programs."

Generally, state parks offer more recreational infrastructure than other department properties. The state parks in this plan are each unique, however, they share many of the same characteristics and are managed in a similar manner.

Priorities for all Superior Coastal Plain State Parks

General Management Priorities

- Provide high-quality, nature-based recreation and educational opportunities and modern facilities that connect visitors to the parks' natural, scenic settings.
- Provide a variety of quality camping opportunities. Considering overall campsite occupancy rates, evaluate and, if feasible, develop new camping facilities.
- Preserve, protect and interpret the historic and cultural features of the parks.
- Preserve and maintain the high quality ecological resources of the parks.

Recreation Management Priorities

- Provide quality, safe opportunities to enjoy the scenic nature of the parks.
- Provide trail systems of varied development levels for a wide range of recreational uses.
- Provide a variety of quality camping opportunities commensurate with demand.



Recreation Management Protocols

- Maintain trails, day use areas, campgrounds and individual campsites at development levels specified under NR 44.
- Ensure campsites and campgrounds meet development standards set under NR 44. Improve and relocate sites as feasible to meet remoteness and site spacing standards set in NR 44.
- Provide electric receptacles at modern (NR 44) campgrounds at the discretion of the Bureau of Parks and Recreation Management to levels set in Wisconsin State Statutes.

Vegetation and Resources

Follow defined forest management priorities and protocols in the document *Managing Forests on Wisconsin State Park Lands* (WDNR, 2010) or its subsequent revision. These priorities are meant to promote WSPS's purpose through enhancing the forests and ecosystems of the parks while maintaining or enhancing recreational and educational opportunities associated with the forest.

WSPS prioritizes the following site characteristics in managing the forests on its lands:

Vegetation and Resource Management Priorities

- Aesthetics: protect scenic views and allow forest cover to provide settings for solitude and privacy.
- Recreation: sustain large canopy cover and shade in picnic areas, campgrounds, along nature trails, and high use areas.
- Habitat: provide habitat for a wide variety of wildlife and plants, including endangered and threatened species.
- Forest Health: Allow for regeneration of the forest through quality forest management and seek opportunities that enhance or maintain the overall health and vigor of the forest ecosystem.
- Pest management: manage invasive plant and animal species, pests, diseases, and nuisance wildlife through prevention, control, and eradication activities.
- Education and research: provide opportunities for interpretation, education and scientific research.
- Water quality: Sustain and enhance local watersheds and water resources including erosion control along waterways, trails and other property features.

Vegetation and Resource Management Protocols

- Conduct forest management activities as necessary, placing emphasis on priorities set and following guidelines given in *Managing Forests on Wisconsin State Park Lands* (WDNR, 2010), including:
 - When feasible and appropriate, establish buffers between harvest areas and designated use areas, trails, and roads. Use techniques in and around buffer areas that maintain and enhance aesthetics.
 - Follow all water quality best management practices for forestry and recreation management.
 - Ensure language guaranteeing proper completion and compliance with aesthetics practices is included in timber sale and silvicultural activity contracts. The property manager will identify the level of visual sensitivity, according to *Managing Forests on Wisconsin State Park Lands* visual sensitivity levels.

- Implement “slow-the-flow” principles described in “Managing Woodlands on Lake Superior’s Red Clay Plain: Slowing the Flow of Runoff” (Shy & Wagner, 2007) or its subsequent revision) to reduce stormwater runoff and desynchronize snowmelt runoff.
- Where appropriate, provide optimal fish and wildlife habitat benefits; especially on wetlands, ephemeral ponds and other high-value habitat areas.
- Remove hazard trees as necessary to protect safety, enhance forest health or otherwise meet property goals.
- Consider impact of invasive species, including emerald ash borer, on forest health and visitor safety. Develop and implement species-specific management plans as necessary.

Additional Superior Coastal Plain State Park Management Considerations

Multiple-Use Trails

The Superior Coastal Plain State Parks offer a host of recreational activities. These include hiking, road and mountain biking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, hunting, fishing, camping and many others. While no park can offer all recreational activities, this plan strives to provide a diversity of quality opportunities across the region. Many of the most popular activities within the region are trail-based. The uses and demands on State Park trails are constantly evolving and park managers often cannot foresee demands for trails that may arise in the future.

To ensure the parks in this plan can adapt to future demands, in appropriate circumstances, current and future trails have been designated as multiple-use. Authorization for trail use in this plan are as follows:

Existing Trails

The property manager is authorized to adjust the designated nonmotorized uses on existing trails to meet changes in use demand. Where multiple uses are allowed only those that are reasonably compatible may be allowed. In the event significant conflicts between different user groups on a multiple-use trail occur, the multiple-use shall be discontinued. Groomed ski and snowshoe trails may only be used for those specific purposes. The designated (allowed) uses of all trails shall be indicated by signs and on property maps. Property managers may also move trail segments as needed to make them more sustainable or to improve user experience. Prior to changing the use of a trail, an internal review process shall take place. Approval authority shall be determined by the Bureau of Parks and Recreation Management.

New Trails or Major Expansions of Existing Trails

New nonmotorized trails or trail loops authorized in this plan and designated multiple-use may be added to accommodate expanding demand for existing nonmotorized uses or to accommodate a new use. All new trails must be compatible with the recreational and resource management objectives of the property and the management area. Prior to initiating any new trail development, the public will be afforded an opportunity to review and comment on the proposal.

Where state law, administrative code or department policy do not allow an activity authorized under this plan, the activity is not authorized. Under this plan, “nonmotorized use” allows bicycles equipped with an electric motor (e-bikes) in accordance with s. NR 45.05(3)(em), Wis Adm. Code. The department may designate a trail open to other bicycle use as open to motor bicycles equipped with electric motors as defined under s. NR 45.05(3)(em), Wis Adm. Code.

Friends, On-site Partners, and Volunteers in Wisconsin State Parks



The department often works with and directs non-profit Friends Groups, youth groups and local volunteer groups to help implement management activities on its public lands. In state parks within the Superior Coastal Plain, the following groups have established MOUs with the department.

- The Friends of Wisconsin State Parks are a nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation and goals of Wisconsin State Parks. They provide volunteer services and financial support for the interpretive, educational, recreational and visitor service programs.
- The Friends of Copper Falls State Park and Friends of Pattison and Amnicon Falls State Park are park-specific groups organized for the charitable and educational purpose of supporting, assisting, and promoting DNR with interpretive, scientific, historical, educational, and related visitor services at Pattison and Amnicon Falls State Parks.
- The North Country Trail Association (Chequamegon, Heritage and Brule-St. Croix Chapters) provides services and support for the management and maintenance of the North Country Trail segments that pass through the Superior Coastal Plain.

Amnicon Falls State Park

Amnicon Falls State Park highlights the Douglas Fault and the dramatic waterfalls characteristic of the Superior Coastal Plain Ecological Landscape. The park offers a rustic recreational experience rich with hiking, nature observation, and camping opportunities.



PROPERTY OVERVIEW

Amnicon Falls State Park, established in 1961, is located approximately seven miles southeast of the City of Superior in Douglas County. It features a series of four waterfalls and rapids along the Amnicon River, a state-designated Outstanding Resource Water. About 12 miles southwest of the park, Amnicon Lake provides the origin to the warm-water river, which flows northeast to its outlet in Lake Superior.

State Ownership:	826 acres
Fee Title:	826 acres
Easement:	0 acres

[Maps](#)

Click the links to access each map type in the online DNR Property Planning Viewer

[DNR & Other Lands](#)

[Recreation](#)

[Roads](#)

[Land Cover](#)

[Land Management Classification](#)

The historic Horton Covered Bridge, one of only five remaining bridges of this type (WDNR, 2012), and trails along the river offer views of the park's waterfalls. The park is among the best places to observe and study the Douglas Fault, a prominent geologic feature in the region along which the Amnicon River splits into three branches along the fault within the park. One of these branches is small and flows only during times of high water, creating the waterfall known as "Now and Then Falls." A former sandstone quarry is present on the site and evidence of the region's early logging days are present throughout. The park's red clay wetland soils typify this region of Wisconsin.

Visitors to Amnicon Falls State Park find a place to picnic, camp, hike, snowshoe, fish, hunt, trap and learn about the Douglas Fault. The park has several picnic areas and an open shelter that can be reserved. A new

park entrance and visitor station (PEVS) was constructed in 2017 and sits near the campground. The interior information area of this facility offers printed resources and the park's only flush toilet facilities.

The park is managed for aesthetics, recreational opportunities, maintaining a natural diversity of wildlife habitat and to protect and perpetuate its natural communities and their associated wildlife and plant species. The natural communities present in the park are representative of Boreal Forest and Northern Dry-mesic Forest communities in the Superior Coastal Plain Ecological Landscape.

Special Attributes

The Amnicon River is designated as an Outstanding Resource Water.

EXISTING RECREATION CONDITIONS AND FACILITIES

Camping

Amnicon Falls State Park has one modern campground (under NR 44.97 (7)(e)4b, Wis. Adm. Code). The campground is classified as modern only because it contains playground equipment. It otherwise meets the standards of a rustic campground under NR 44.



The campground has 36 total campsites, with one being ADA accessible sites and two hike-in sites. There are no sites with electricity. All campsites, except the designated hike-in sites, are accessible by motor vehicle.

Day Use Areas

Nine day-use areas are provided at Amnicon Falls State Park. The Reservable Shelter Day Use Area contains a 50-person, ADA accessible pavilion. This shelter has electricity and is served by a vault toilet facility and pressurized water station. Most of the picnic areas are convenient locations to view the Amnicon River. Other viewing locations exist throughout the park and offer safe enjoyment of the park's waterfalls.

Table 2.4 Amnicon Falls State Park Day Use Areas

Day Use Area	NR 44 Development Standard
Campground Play Area	Rustic
Covered Bridge/Now and Then Falls	Rustic
Picnic Area 1	Rustic
Picnic Area 2	Rustic
Picnic Area 3	Rustic
Picnic Area 4	Rustic
Picnic Area 5 – Reservable Shelter	Modern
Picnic Area 6	Rustic
Picnic Area 7	Rustic

Trails

Amnicon Falls State Park has several trails for hiking in summer and snowshoeing in winter.

Table 2.5. Amnicon Falls State Park Trails

Trail	Summer Use	Winter Use	Length (Miles)	NR 44 Trail Standard
Snowshoe	Hiking	Snowshoeing	1.5	Lightly Developed
Thimbleberry	Hiking	Snowshoeing	0.8	Lightly Developed
Falls Viewing Trails	Hiking	Hiking	0.75	Fully Developed
Thimbleberry to Quarry Pond	Hiking	Hiking	0.2	Lightly Developed

Roads and Parking Lots

Amnicon Falls has six main parking lots, all paved, located throughout the park. Parking is also available at each campsite for those staying in the campground. The park has 1.1 miles of open DNR roads. 5.5 miles of non-DNR public roads either border or intersect the park.

Table 2.6. Amnicon Falls State Park Roads

Road Classification	Open DNR Roads	Seasonal DNR Roads	Closed DNR Roads
Moderately-developed Road	1.1	0.1	0
Primitive Road	0	0.1	0.1
Fully-developed Road	0	0	0

Support Facilities

Table 2.7. Amnicon Falls State Park Support Facilities

Facility	Description
Park Entrance Visitor Station (PEVS)	Construction on the PEVS was completed in 2017. It is located at the start of the campground loop and serves as a park office and visitor contact station. During the camping season, the public portion of the PEVS is open after office hours, providing the only flush toilet facility in the park.

Other Recreation Facilities and Attractions

Viewing platforms and areas exist along the Amnicon River throughout the park. These viewing areas offer visitors the opportunity to safely observe the waterfalls that serve as the park's namesake. The historic Horton Bridge, a 55-foot covered bridge, spans Lower Falls. The bridge is a popular waterfall viewing and photography location and is one of only five known Horton bridges.

A former brownstone quarry is also present on the property. The quarry, now filled with water, supplied building material to many of the nearby City of Superior's prominent older buildings. Today, the quarry pond is a quiet hiking location for park visitors. Those visiting the quarry pond have an opportunity to learn about the quarry's history and often see wildlife associated with a pond setting.

Land Use and Partner Agreements

A pipeline easement with American Gas and Transmission company divides the property. The Friends of Pattison and Amnicon Falls State Parks are active participants in the park's operation through volunteering, fundraising, and aiding the park in buying materials and equipment to improve trails and interpretive programs.



LAND COVER

Table 2.8 lists the habitat classifications for Amnicon Falls State Park in its entirety. The WisFIRS Cover Types listed can be used to reference Table 2.2 when identifying habitat management Common Elements relevant to the property.

Table 2.8 Amnicon Falls State Park Land Cover

Habitat Classification	Acres	% Cover	Representative Cover Types
Upland Deciduous	630	78	Aspen, White Birch
Upland Conifer	60	7	Balsam Fir, Red Pine, White Spruce
Shrub Wetland	31	4	Alder
Developed	29	4	Right of Way
Forested Wetland	28	3	Swamp Hardwoods
Open Water	23	3	Minor Lake, Minor Stream
Upland Grass	1	1	Remnant Prairie – Dry Mesic

Most land cover of Amnicon Falls State Park is early successional, upland forest composed predominantly of trembling aspen with balsam fir.

Approximately half of the upland deciduous habitat classification is available for forest or habitat management. The rest, within the scenic resources management area, is reserved to convert naturally to other longer-lived cover types. The areas reserved for natural conversion serve as a buffer along the Amnicon River and developed portions of the property. Remnants of upland conifer forest are present but occur only along the Amnicon River. This moderate-to-good-quality, older-aged Northern Dry-mesic Forest is present on the river banks near high use areas around the campground and falls areas. Here, the canopy is dominated by large diameter white and red pine.

Several rare plant species are located along the Amnicon River within the pine-dominated forest. Small wetlands of Northern Sedge Meadow and Hardwood Swamp add diversity to the property. NR 40 restricted plant species, including Japanese barberry, crown vetch, leafy and cypress spurge, Eurasian honeysuckles, common buckthorn, tansy and garden valerian occur in and near Amnicon Falls State Park.

MANAGEMENT AREAS AND CLASSIFICATIONS

This section details the future management, development, and use of Amnicon Falls State Park. The park is divided into three management areas, with associated land management classification:

- Area 1: Waterfalls Recreation Management Area
- Area 2: Upland Forest Recreation Management Area
- Area 3: River Gorge Scenic Resources Management Area

Property-wide Management

Apply Management for all State Parks of the Superior Coastal Plain (page 17) in addition to the following management objectives and prescriptions. These apply to all management areas within Amnicon Falls State Park.

Objectives

- Provide a safe visitor experience for those seeking to experience the beauty of Amnicon Falls and the surrounding landscape in a sustainable, aesthetically pleasing manner.
- Promote education and appreciation of the Douglas Fault and Amnicon River, the river's Outstanding Resource Water status, and their associated ecosystems and rare species.
- Provide a system of all-season, nonmotorized, recreational trails. Allow appropriate water crossings when necessary.
- Provide quality hike-in and family camping experiences.
- Sustainably manage and conserve Northern-Mesic forest natural community areas in conjunction with meeting the recreation needs of park visitors.

Prescriptions

- Maintain existing facilities at development levels (shown in facility tables) to provide existing recreation opportunities unless otherwise prescribed.
- Construct appropriate nonmotorized trail and road water crossings when necessary. Follow all relevant department design standards when developing fords, culverts, bridges and other water crossings.
- Develop a primitive to lightly-developed multiple-use trail for both summer and winter uses from the campground and PEVS area to the more remote portions of the property to provide additional recreation opportunities and access to future primitive campsites.
- Develop up to five primitive, hike-in campsites and associated primitive to lightly developed trail loop. Close sites as necessary during hunting seasons.

Common Elements

Apply General Property Management Practices and Recreation Facilities and their Management Common Elements.

Apply Habitats and their Management Common Elements. Reference Table 2.8 and Table 2.2 to determine applicable Common Elements. Management described in Common Elements, which conflicts with management described in this document is not applicable.

Guidance for use of Common Elements can be found on page 13. If management described in this plan conflicts with Common Elements, apply the management described in this document.

- Evaluate the environmental, economic, and social feasibility of constructing off-road or mountain biking facilities. Construct the trail system if considered necessary, feasible, and compatible with land management classifications.
- Allow and encourage research and educational programming regarding the natural and historical setting of Amnicon Falls State Park.
- Following a catastrophic event (e.g. wind, fire, ice damage, forest pests), salvage harvests may be completed throughout all management areas. Place emphasis on aesthetics and visitor safety when planning and conducting salvage operations.

Area 1: Waterfalls Recreation Management Area

Classification: Recreation Management Area

Recreational Use Setting: Type 4

Size: 174 Acres

The Waterfalls Recreation Management Area is located south of the pipeline right-of-way that bisects the park and is bounded on the west by an unnamed tributary to the Amnicon River. The majority of Amnicon Falls State Park's recreational offerings are within this management area. Management of this area is predominantly focused on providing a rustic recreational experience while protecting the unique resources of the park.

Much of Amnicon River Waterfalls Recreation Management Area is developed as roads, day use areas, and campgrounds. Areas of Northern-Mesic Forest natural community also exist. No substantive change in land cover is anticipated.

Table 2.9. Waterfalls Recreation Management Area Land Cover

Waterfalls Recreation Management Area		
Habitat Classification	Acres	% Cover
Upland Deciduous	98	56
Upland Conifer	39	22
Developed	21	12
Open Water	11	6
Shrub Wetland	3	2
Upland Grass	2	1
Forested Wetland	1	1

Area Management

Apply property-wide management (page 25) in addition to objectives and prescriptions for this management area.

Objectives

- Provide quality, accessible opportunities for safe viewing and photography of the Amnicon River, its associated waterfalls and surrounding landscape, while not negatively impacting the scenic quality of the park.
- Provide opportunity and facilities for hiking, camping, bicycling, nature photography and educational programming.
- Maintain and enhance the natural-appearing character of this management area.

Prescriptions

- Maintain the family campground to rustic campground standards (NR 44.97 (7)(e)4b, Wis. Adm. Code), except to allow playground equipment. Allow electric receptacles on the host campsite only.



- Assess the need for additional playground equipment in the campground play area and install if deemed feasible and necessary given visitor demands.
- Develop an ADA accessible cabin near the park office and campground if considered necessary and feasible.
- Provide a primitive to lightly developed trail around the quarry pond.
- Work with partners to maintain and enhance day use and picnic areas as necessary and feasible.
- Develop and maintain older forest characteristics where practicable, including larger diameter trees. Use a combination of active and passive management techniques and where appropriate, allow for natural retention of coarse woody debris and standing snags.
- Design and conduct vegetation and other land management activities, as practicable, to maintain and enhance an attractive, natural appearing landscape. Use visual quality management techniques to minimize and rapidly reduce secondary, negative visual quality impacts of management activities.

Area 2: Upland Forest Recreation Management Area

Classification:	Recreation Management Area
Recreational Use Setting:	Type 3
Size:	413 Acres

Amnicon Falls Type 3 Recreation Management Area is composed primarily of the less developed upland portions of the property. The Thimbleberry Trail crosses into this management area briefly. The area is managed to provide habitat and more dispersed recreation such as primitive camping and hunting. Aspen stands with small areas of upland conifer dominate the land cover of this area. Small increases in the percentage of upland conifer may occur in the long term, but overall cover types are expected to remain largely static.

Table 2.10. Upland Forest Recreation Management Area Land Cover

Upland Forest Recreation Management Area		
Habitat Classification	Acres	% Cover
Upland Deciduous	340	82
Shrub Wetland	32	8
Forested Wetland	21	5
Upland Conifer	12	3
Developed	6	2
Open Water	2	>1

Area Management

Apply property-wide management (page 25) in addition to objectives and prescriptions for this management area.

Objectives

- Provide access to recreational opportunities such as fishing, hunting, off-road bicycling, hiking, and primitive camping.
- Maintain and enhance the natural appearing character of the management area to provide opportunities for solitude and remoteness.
- Manage upland habitat areas to provide wildlife habitat and protect water quality.

Prescriptions

- Develop primitive camping and multiple-use, trail-based nonmotorized recreational opportunities as feasible and compatible with property-wide objectives.
- Construct up to two grass or gravel parking areas, accessible via CTH U, each able to accommodate no more than ten vehicles.
- Provide high-quality, mixed-age deciduous forest habitat for wildlife species, with an emphasis on aspen, and natural origin, native conifer. Maintain and, as appropriate, allow for increase in upland conifer stands.
- In appropriate areas, such as around primitive campsites, use a combination of active and passive management techniques to develop and maintain older forest characteristics, including large diameter trees.

Area 3: River Gorge Scenic Resources Management Area

Classification:	Scenic Resources Management Area
Recreational Use Setting:	Type 3
Size:	243 acres

River Gorge Scenic Resources Management Area envelopes the Amnicon River and its associated gorge and steep topography areas, outside of Waterfalls Recreation Management Area. The goal of this scenic resources management area is to protect the aesthetic qualities of the Amnicon River and its associated gorge. Land cover is primarily upland deciduous aspen forest with some swamp oak and other swamp hardwoods interspersed throughout. Land cover is not expected to change.

Table 2.11. River Gorge Scenic Resources Management Area Land Cover

River Gorge Scenic Resources Management Area		
Habitat Classification	Acres	% Cover
Upland Deciduous	203	84
Upland Conifer	13	5
Open Water	13	5
Forested Wetland	11	5
Developed	3	1

Area Management

Apply property-wide management (page 25) in addition to objectives and prescriptions for this management area.

Objectives

- Manage forests to maintain and enhance the unique aesthetics of the Amnicon River and its associated viewshed and protect stream channel integrity, particularly during peak flow conditions from precipitation and snowmelt.
- Maintain and enhance recreational opportunities such as fishing, hunting, hiking, and primitive camping; while providing wildlife habitat and protecting water quality.
- Develop primitive camping and trail-based, nonmotorized recreational opportunities harmonious with the surrounding landscape and with minimal negative impact on the scenic value of the area. Trails should be primitive to lightly-developed. Facilities should be developed only as feasible and in line with property-wide objectives and visitor demands.
- Use a combination of active and passive management techniques to develop and maintain older forest characteristics, including larger diameter trees in appropriate areas.

BIG BAY STATE PARK

Big Bay State Park showcases Lake Superior views, a unique camping opportunity, and many of the rare communities endemic to the Superior Coastal Plain.



PROPERTY OVERVIEW

Big Bay State Park is located on the south shore of Madeline Island, the largest of the 22 Apostle Islands. It was designated a state park in 1963. The park offers picturesque sandstone bluffs and caves, a 1.5-mile-long sand beach, a modern campground, hiking trails and a large, biologically diverse wetland. Unique habitat types within the park include lakeside dunes, sphagnum bogs, and old-growth forest.

State Ownership:	2,517 acres
Fee Title:	2,495 acres
Easement:	22 acres

Big Bay State Park has a variety of facilities and recreational opportunities. The campground is a popular place for visitors to Madeline Island to stay and many visitors explore the park and its surroundings via bicycle. The Town of La Pointe owns and maintains a park and campground, Big Bay Town Park, on the north side of Big Bay State Park. Portions of the state park are open to hunting and trapping and anglers can fish Lake Superior or the park's lagoon.

[Maps](#)

Click the links to access each map type in the online DNR Property Planning Viewer

[DNR & Other Lands](#)

[Recreation](#)

[Roads](#)

[Land Cover](#)

[Land Management Classification](#)

Special Attributes

Big Bay State Park lies within a global Conservation Opportunity Area as described in the Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan (WDNR, 2015a). Big Bay, as one of the most unusual, diverse, and pristine mosaic of natural communities in the Great Lakes, is a designated Wisconsin Land Legacy Place.

Big Bay Sand Spit and Bog State Natural Area (SNA) is embedded within the park and managed to protect and perpetuate its unique mix of natural communities and their associated wildlife and plant species. Great Lakes Beach and Dune, Boreal Forest, Northern Mesic Forest, Northern Sedge Meadow and Northern Mesic Forest native communities are present in the park and are representative samples of those communities in the Superior Coastal Plain Ecological Landscape. The SNA, Management Area 2 in this plan, was originally established in 1980 and is

proposed to expand with approval of this plan.

EXISTING RECREATION CONDITIONS AND FACILITIES

Camping

Big Bay State Park has one modern family campground with 60 campsites. Sites are accessible by motor-vehicle, except for seven hike-in sites. The campground has flush toilets and showers centrally located. Garbage and recycling facilities are located throughout the park. The park also houses two group camp areas, both classified as modern and accessible by motor vehicle.

Day Use Areas

Three day-use areas are provided. Big Bay Barrier Beach is popular with visitors. A kayak concessionaire, stationed at the beach, currently has a contract with the park.



Table 2.12. Big Bay State Park Day Use Areas

Day Use Area	NR 44 Development Standard
Overlook Picnic Area	Modern
Point Picnic Area	Rustic
Day-Use Picnic Area	Modern
Big Bay - Barrier Beach	Rustic

Trails

Big Bay State Park has seven trails, all used for hiking in the summer. Trails are not groomed in the winter but are open for pedestrian uses.

Table 2.13. Big Bay State Park Trails

Trail	Summer Use	Winter Use	Length (Miles)	NR 44 Trail Standard
Lagoon Ridge	Hiking	Multiple-Use	2.5	Lightly Developed
Point Loop	Hiking	Multiple-Use	0.5	Moderately Developed
Point	Hiking	Multiple-Use	1.1	Moderately Developed
Cut-Across	Hiking	Multiple-Use	0.1	Moderately Developed
Bayview	Hiking	Multiple-Use	1.3	Moderately Developed
Woods	Hiking	Multiple-Use	0.7	Moderately Developed
Boardwalk	Hiking	Multiple-Use	0.5	Moderately Developed

Roads and Parking Areas

Big Bay State Park has eight parking areas. 7.8 miles of public, non-DNR roads are either adjacent to or intersect the park.

Table 2.14. Big Bay State Park Roads

Road Classification	Open DNR Roads	Seasonal DNR Roads	Closed DNR Roads
Moderately-developed Road	0	3.4	0.2
Fully-developed Road	0	0	0

Water Access



Visitors may access Lake Superior for swimming from the park's 1.5-mile sandy beach. Many paddlers also use the beach as a launch.

Support Facilities

Table 2.15. Big Bay State Park Support Facilities

Support Facility	Description
Hagen House	Hagen House is a historic structure. The area surrounding the Hagen House serves as an educational area for park visitors.
Schultz House	Schultz house currently serves as employee housing.
Park Entrance Visitor Station (PEVS)	The PEVS is located at the park entrance off Hagen Road. The building houses the park office and visitor registration and information services.
Firewood Shed	The firewood shed provides a station for campers to purchase firewood compliant with state firewood code.
Service/Maintenance Area	The service and maintenance area provides maintenance and storage needs.
Sanitary Station	The sanitary station serves as the park's septic and sanitary sewer system.
Camper Waste Station	The camper waste station is located outside the park's boundaries, near the Madeline Island Airport.

Other Recreation Facilities

Facility	Description
Wildlife Observation Deck	The deck, near Big Bay Lagoon, offers visitors a convenient area to watch the diversity of wildlife that inhabit the park.
Naturalist Program and Fire Ring Area	An area for park visitors to gather to learn more about the park and its natural history.
Changing Building	Building near the beach provided to allow visitors to change.
Indoor Group Camp	The two-story, rustic log constructed indoor group camp facility contains a full kitchen and is reservable. The facility is closed and in need of renovation.

LAND COVER

Table 2.16 shows land cover for Big Bay State Park.



Table 2.16. Big Bay State Park Land Cover

Habitat Classification	GIS Acres	% Cover	Representative Cover Types
Upland Broad-leaved Deciduous Forest	1163	44	Aspen, Northern Hardwoods, Red Maple, White Birch, Oak
Great Lakes Coastal	788	30	Great Lakes Beach
Upland Coniferous Forest	248	9	Balsam Fir, Hemlock, Miscellaneous Conifer, Red Pine, White Pine
Water	186	7	Water
Upland Grass	180	7	Remnant Sand Prairie, Remnant Prairie – Dry Mesic
Developed	47	2	Campground, Developed Use, Parking Area, Picnic Area, Right of Way
Cliff/Outcrops	14	1	Rock Outcrops

The land cover of Big Bay State Park is mixed and features an abundance of older, naturally developed stands. Seventy percent of the forest cover is over 100 years old; whereas only thirteen percent of the forest cover is middle aged trees between 36-65 years old. Red maple is the primary forest type on the property. However, aspen, black spruce, oak, tamarack and hemlock combined (almost equally) account for almost half of the remaining forested acres.

Timber management in the state park has been limited due to the logistics of transporting equipment and timber between the island and the mainland. Known NR 40 restricted plant species on Madeline Island include; leafy and cypress spurge and yellow iris.

MANAGEMENT AREAS AND CLASSIFICATIONS

This section details the future management, development, and use of Big Bay State Park. The park is divided into three management areas:

- Area 1: Big Bay Point Recreation Management Area
- Area 2: Big Bay Sand Spit and Bog SNA Native Community Management Area
- Area 3: Big Bay Forest Recreation Management Area

Property Wide Management

Apply Management for all State Parks of the Superior Coastal Plain (page 17) in addition to the following management objectives and prescriptions. These apply to all management areas within Big Bay State Park.

Objectives

- Maintain and, when feasible, increase and improve, bicycle access to and throughout the park.
- Provide opportunities for appreciation and enjoyment of the unique views of Lake Superior afforded by Big Bay State Park's island location.
- Provide a system of nonmotorized recreational trails throughout the park.
- Using space available and to the extent possible, provide well-maintained employee housing to minimize department expenses associated with management of a ferry-accessed island.

Prescriptions

- As opportunities become available, work with the Town of La Pointe to improve the bicycle riding experience to Big Bay State park from non-DNR owned portions of Madeline Island.
- Create a fully-developed, paved, nonmotorized off-road bicycling and hiking trail from the park entrance to the Point Trail area of the park, if feasible.
- Manage vegetation in shore and cliff areas for a natural appearing landscape while maintaining and enhancing Lake Superior viewshed. Emphasis should be placed on maintaining the undeveloped nature of the Lake Superior coastline.
- Unless otherwise noted, maintain existing trails, parking areas and other facilities at current development levels to provide existing recreation opportunities.
- Evaluate employee housing options available on the property. Move employee housing, from Schultz House, if feasible, when a more desirable location is found.

Common Elements

Apply General Property Management Practices and Recreation Facilities and their Management Common Elements.

Apply Habitats and their Management Common Elements. Reference Table 2.16 and Table 2.2 to determine applicable Common Elements. Management described in Common Elements, which conflicts with management described in this document is not applicable.

Guidance for use of Common Elements can be found on page 13. If management described in this plan conflicts with Common Elements, apply the management described in this document.

Area 1: Big Bay Point Recreation Management Area

Classification:	Recreation Management Area
Recreational Use Setting:	Type 4
Size:	326 acres

Big Bay Point Recreation Management Area is composed of the more developed areas of Big Bay State Park. The park's PEVS, campground and other recreational facilities fall within the boundaries of this area. The area's land cover is largely developed, no change is anticipated.

Table 2.17. Big Bay Point Recreation Management Area Land Cover

Big Bay Point Recreation Management Area		
Habitat Classification	Acres	% Cover
Upland Deciduous	127	39
Upland Conifer	104	32
Forested Wetland	39	12
Developed	39	12
Upland Grass	11	3
Shrub Wetland	6	2

Area Management

Apply property-wide management (page 35) in addition to objectives and prescriptions for this management area.

Objectives

- Provide quality family and group camping, as well as day-use options for park users; including picnicking, hiking, nature photography and education and bicycling,
- Maintain and enhance the natural appearing character of the management area, placing emphasis on panoramic Lake Superior views.

Management Prescriptions

- Maintain trails at existing NR 44 development levels. Make improvements to Bayview and Point Loop trails to mitigate future washouts.
- Evaluate family campground occupancy rates and expand within the management area as feasible to meet visitor needs. Prior to major campground expansion, follow the variance process under NR 44.04(4) to establish location of the expansion and receive public input.
- Provide electric receptacles at campsites up to allowable limits under Wisconsin state statutes and department administrative code and department policy.
- Evaluate desirability and feasibility of constructing a gazebo or shelter building within the management area. Work with partners to fundraise and construct if considered desirable and feasible.
- After a catastrophic event (i.e. wind, fire, ice damage, forest pest damage), conduct salvage harvests as able and appropriate to restore park function and aesthetics.

- To the degree feasible and practicable, design and conduct vegetation and other land management activities to maintain and enhance an attractive, natural appearing landscape. Use visual quality management techniques to minimize and rapidly reduce secondary, negative visual quality impacts of management activities.

Area 2: Big Bay Sand Spit and Bog State Natural Area

Classification:	Native Community Management Area
Recreational Use Setting:	Type 3
Size:	1,142 acres

Big Bay Sand Spit and Bog features a long, curving baymouth bar behind which lies a lagoon, an extensive quaking sphagnum-sedge bog, and older sand ridges. The youngest bar is marked by four zones: 1) wet sand beach less than 20 feet wide; 2) dry beach stabilized by several species of beach grasses; 3) rear beach or heath zone sloping away from the beach sand, sparsely wooded with red and white pines in barrens-like openings covered with lichens, bearberry, low juniper, false heather, blueberry, and huckleberry; and 4) tall shrub zone bordering the lagoon edge of the sand spit. Vegetation west of the sand spit consists of submerged aquatics in the shallow water and bog shrubs on the many small islands as it grades into sphagnum-sedge bog. The floating bog contains one of the richest bog floras in the Lake Superior region. Just east of the old ridge is a conifer swamp of white cedar, black and white spruces, and tamarack. The old ridge is second-growth timber. An extensive cordwalk allows visitors to traverse the baymouth bar without disturbing the sensitive vegetation. Big Bay Sand Spit and Bog was designated a State Natural Area in 1980 (WDNR, 2018b).

The Boardwalk trail borders the State Natural Area along the barrier beach and a ADA accessible wood walkway offers access to the beach from the Day Use Picnic Area while winding through a portion of the SNA, offering the public an accessible way to learn about the ecology of the area. The lightly-developed Lagoon Ridge Trail also crosses the State Natural Area.

Big Bay Sand Spit and Bog State Natural Area is managed for old growth wetland forest lake and shore fen, Great Lakes Barrens, and as an ecological reference area. Very light thinning of barrens trees and shrubs and lightly applied, patchy, prescribed fire can be implemented on the sand spit. (WDNR, 2018b)

Land cover of Big Bay Sand Spit and Bog Management Area is shown in Table 2.18 and is not anticipated to change.

Table 2.18. Big Bay Sand Spit and Bog State Natural Area Land Cover

Big Bay Sand Spit and Bog State Natural Area		
Habitat Classification	Acres	% Cover
Upland Deciduous	933	82
Upland Grass	78	7
Upland Conifer	46	4
Forested Wetland	33	3
Shrub Wetland	30	3
Open Water	16	1
Developed	6	<1

Area Management

Apply property-wide management (page 35) in addition to objectives and prescriptions for this management area.

Objectives

- Maintain nonmotorized, trail and beach-based recreation opportunities.
- Maintain the management area for old growth wetland forest lake and shore fen, Great Lakes Barrens and for a mostly undeveloped shoreline.
- Foster educational opportunities regarding the unique features which create the setting for the designated state natural area.

Prescriptions

- Complete beach boardwalk construction and maintain for beach and natural area access.
- Maintain beach access from the Day Use Picnic Area stairs and boardwalk.
- Allow use of canoes, kayaks, and other nonmotorized watercraft in beach area. Do not develop boat launch facilities.
- As visitor needs demand, trail and boardwalk construction or rerouting may occur after consultation between property manager, district ecologist and forester.
- After a catastrophic event (i.e. wind, fire, ice damage, forest pest damage), conduct salvage harvests to restore park function and aesthetics following consultation between the property manager, district ecologist, forester, and wildlife biologist.
- Allow vegetation management for enhancing aesthetics and Lake Superior views. Active management practices found in Common Elements cover types found within the management area are allowed.
- Except for invasive species control and visitor safety management practices, primarily allow natural processes to determine the structure of the forest and wetland cover. Use non-commercial, timber stand improvement techniques such as hand girdling to promote desirable tree species.

Area 3: Big Bay Forest Recreation Management Area

Classification:	Recreation Management Area
Recreational Use Setting:	Type 3
Size:	969 acres

Big Bay Forest Recreation Management Area represents the balance of the park outside of the developed recreation and native community management areas. The lightly developed Lagoon Ridge Trail crosses this management area as it connects the Day Use Picnic Area to the Town Park. The indoor group camp facility is also located within this management area.

The area is a mix of swamp conifers, red maple, aspen, and northern hardwoods. While commercial timber management is considered a management option, the logistics of a traditional timber sale on Madeline Island is a barrier. The area is primarily managed for habitat, trails and dispersed recreation opportunities. The land cover of Area 3 is not anticipated to change.

Table 2.19. Big Bay Forest Recreation Management Area

Big Bay Forest Recreation Management Area		
Habitat Classification	Acres	% Cover
Forested Wetland	360	37
Open Water	170	187
Upland Deciduous	166	17
Shrub Wetland	90	9
Upland Grass	90	9
Upland Conifer	77	8
Cliffs/Outcrops	14	2
Developed	2	<1

Area Management

Apply property-wide management (page 35) in addition to objectives and prescriptions for this management area.

Objectives

- Maintain and enhance the natural appearing character of the management area to provide opportunities for solitude and remoteness.
- Provide recreational opportunities for primitive camping and trail-based activities as feasible and consistent with visitor needs.

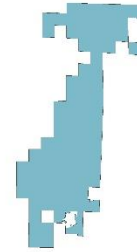
Prescriptions

- Assess the feasibility of off-road, fully-developed bicycle trail along Hagen Road and CTH H. Construct if considered feasible and necessary.
- As available funding and visitor demands allow, restore and re-open the existing indoor group camp facility.

- Maintain outdoor Group Camp 2 and evaluate the current Schultz House location for an additional group camp facility. Convert Schultz House to a group camp facility if considered feasible.
- Use a combination of active and passive management techniques to develop and maintain older forest characteristics, including larger diameter trees, on suitable sites. Where appropriate, allow for natural retention of coarse woody debris and standing snags.
- Use visual quality management techniques to minimize and rapidly reduce secondary, negative visual quality impacts of management activities.
- Following a catastrophic event (e.g. wind, fire, ice damage, forest pests), salvage harvests may be completed at the discretion of the property manager.

Copper Falls State Park

Copper Falls State Park is a microcosm of the Superior Coastal Plain. It exhibits many iconic features of the landscape including fault line waterfalls, boreal forest communities, outstanding water quality, and historic Conservation Corps buildings.



PROPERTY OVERVIEW

Copper Falls State Park is located two miles northeast of Mellen, in Ashland County. The 3,342-acre park sits on the Bad River Fault, the boundary between the Superior Coastal Plain and the North Central Forest ecological landscapes. The park was established in 1929 and is known for its deep gorges and waterfalls on the Bad River and its tributary, the Tyler Forks. The Bad River begins at Caroline Lake, south of Mellen; when it enters the park, it drops 29 feet over basaltic lava into a steep gorge. From here, the Bad River joins with the Tyler Forks to flow over basaltic lava in a series of falls and rapids totaling 70 feet, including Brownstone Falls, Copper Falls, and Red Granite Falls. The park also includes two small lakes.

State Ownership:	3,543 acres
Fee Title:	3,540 acres
Easement:	3 acres

Historic infrastructure at the park exists due to the Great Depression-era government agencies such as the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA). These historic facilities have given Copper Falls State Park a place on the National Register of Historic Places.

Copper Falls State Park has a variety of recreational opportunities. A variety of camping opportunities allow visitors to pursue a diversity of camping experiences. A nine-mile portion of the 4,600-mile North Country National Scenic

Trail weaves through Copper Falls State Park. The local chapters of the North Country Trail Association manage the trail through an agreement with the department. North Country Trail Association raises donations and enlists the help of volunteers to build and maintain segments of the trail. Other hiking trails span the property and provide access to scenic lookouts over the falls. Off-road bicycling trails and cross-country ski trails are also available. Snowshoeing and hiking are allowed throughout the park. A swimming beach is present at Loon Lake. Hunting and trapping are allowed in certain areas of the park.

Copper Falls State Park is managed to protect the cultural and natural resources of the park. These resources include historic structures, Tyler Forks and Bad Rivers (including their waterfalls and rapids), and other opportunities for outdoor recreation. Management strategies protect and perpetuate the unique mix of natural communities and their associated wildlife and plant species. These communities are representative of

Northern Dry-Mesic Forest, Northern Mesic Forest, Mesic Floodplain Terrace and Ephemeral Pond communities in the Superior Coastal Plain Ecological Landscape.

Special Attributes

Copper Falls State Natural Area overlays a portion of the property, it is listed described further as Area 4 (page 55) in this plan. Numerous hiking trails provide access to the natural area and falls. This area is managed passively,

[Maps](#)

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[DNR & Other Lands](#)

[Recreation \(Summer\)](#)

[Recreation \(Winter\)](#)

[Roads](#)

[Land Cover](#)

[Land Management Classification](#)

allowing nature to determine the ecological characteristics. The Bad River, which flows through the park, is classified as an Exceptional Resource Water.

EXISTING RECREATION CONDITIONS AND FACILITIES

Camping

Copper Falls State Park contains two campgrounds, North Campground and South Campground. Both are classified as modern campgrounds under NR 44 development standards. North Campground contains sites with electric receptacles and has vault toilet facilities. South Campground has no sites with electrical hook-ups, with the exception of the camp host site, and has several vault toilets along with a shower and flush toilet facility.

A group of hike-in campsites are present east of South Campground. A hike-in campsite is located two miles north of North Campground. All hike-in campsites are developed as rustic campsites. The Copper Falls State Park Group Camp Facility is a rustic facility and accommodates tents only. The park also hosts an ADA accessible camper cabin.

Table 2.20. Copper Falls State Park Camping Facilities

Campground/Facility	NR 44 Development Standard
North Campground	Modern
South Campground	Modern
Hike-in Campsites – North Country Trail	Primitive
Hike-in Campsites – South Campground	Semi-Primitive
Group Camp	Rustic

Day Use Areas

Copper Falls State Park provides four picnic and day-use area.

Table 2.21. Copper Falls State Park Day Use Areas

Day Use Area	NR 44 Development Standard
Ball Field	Modern
Pet Area	Rustic
Picnic Area	Modern
Loon Lake Beach	Modern

Areas offering expansive views of the waterfalls of the Bad River and Tyler Forks are available throughout the day use areas and from many of the park's trails.

Trails

The following trails are present at Copper Falls State Park. Select trails within the park change names and become part of different trail systems based on the season. Table 2.22 indicates which trails seasonally change names, configuration, by showing a gray box in the season the trail is not active.

Table 2.22. Copper Falls State Park Trails

Trail	Summer Use	Winter Use	Length (Miles)	NR 44 Trail Standard
Takesson Trail	Off-Road Bicycling, Hiking	Cross-country Skiing	2.5	Lightly Developed
Vahtera Trail	Off-Road Bicycling	Cross-country Skiing	1.7	Lightly Developed
Red Granite Falls Trail	Hiking	Multiple-Use	2.5	Moderately Developed
North Country Trail	Hiking	Hiking	9.25	Lightly Developed
*Doughboys Nature Trail	Hiking	Hiking	1.7	Fully Developed
CCC 692 Trail	Hiking		1.0	Primitive
Meadow Trail		Cross-country Skiing	1.6	Lightly Developed
Pipeline Trail		Cross-country Skiing	5	Lightly Developed
Waterfall Trail		Multiple-Use	0.5	Lightly Developed
Backpack Campsite Access	Hiking	Hiking	0.5	Primitive

*Designated as a nature trail, therefore no pets are allowed.

Roads and Parking Lots

Table 2.23 shows the mileage of roads that offer access to Copper Falls State Park. Copper Falls State Park has 11 parking areas.

Table 2.23. Copper Falls State Park Roads

Road Classification	Open DNR Roads	Seasonal DNR Roads	Closed DNR Roads
Moderately Developed Road	2.5	1.0	0.2
Primitive Road	0	0.4	0
Fully-developed Road	0	0	0

Water Access

The park features one small canoe/kayak launch on Loon Lake. Visitors may also access Loon Lake via the beach.

Support Facilities

The facilities in Table 2.24 support Copper Falls State Park operations. Italicized facilities are listed as contributing facilities in the park's designation on the National Register of Historic Places.

Table 2.24. Copper Falls State Park Support Facilities

Support Facility	Description
Camper Sanitary Station	Facility for camper waste water disposal.
Concession Stand	The concession stand is located near the Doughboy's trailhead and is operated by an outside concessionaire, contracted with the park.
Custodian's Residence (Staff Housing)	The Custodian's Residence is located in the maintenance area of the park, has a natural stone porch and 11 sets of double-hung windows. The residence is currently used for park employee housing, typically for the park superintendent.
Garage and Repair Shop	This facility was built in 1940 and is in the park's maintenance area. The outside walls are finished with native black granite harvested from local quarries. The building remains in use as a garage and repair shop.
2-Door Metal Pole Barn	The facility stores park equipment and supplies.
4-Door Metal Pole Barn	The facility stores park equipment and supplies.
Combination Building and Patio (Concession and Open Air Patio)	The combination building and patio is located in the north-central part of the park. It contains a number of services including accessible bathroom facilities. The concrete patio has a smooth and highly polished appearance due to the methods used when it was poured. The building is used for concessions and as a shelter for events.
Log Footbridge	The historic log footbridge sits near the site of two 1880's era copper mines. The structure was built across the Bad River in 1948 and provides foot travel to trails.
Observation Tower	The observation tower provides panoramic views of the Bad River and surrounding areas. On a high-visibility day, Lake Superior is visible 24 miles to the north.
Ravine Footbridge	The 76-foot long ravine footbridge was built in 1939 and connects the Doughboy's trail across a deep ravine north of Copper Falls.
Devil's Gate Footbridge	The Devil's gate footbridge facilitates the Doughboy's Trail's crossing of the Bad River, northwest of Devil's Gate falls.
Tyler Forks Footbridge	Tyler Forks Footbridge crosses the Tyler Forks river east of its confluence with the Bad River, offering views of the Tyler Forks cascades. The bridge is 40 feet long and is the last of the original CCC bridges.
Pump House	The pump house is located south of the Tyler Forks and east of that river's confluence with the Bad River. The pump house was dug into a hill and the walls are

Support Facility	Description
	constructed of large stones stacked without mortar. Only the pine door is visible from the outside. The pump house is no longer in use and is closed to the public.
Old Office Building	The former office building is now used for storage.

All historical facilities descriptions reference the national historic designation application.

Other Recreation Facilities

The facilities in Table 2.25 are additional recreation facilities at Copper Falls State Park. Italicized facilities are listed as contributing facilities in the park's listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Table 2.25. Other Copper Falls State Park Recreation Facilities

Facility	Description
Falls Observation Decks	Three observation decks are present along the trails overlooking the falls of the park.
Loon Lake Beach	Loon Lake Beach offers a swimming area on Loon Lake for visitors to the park.
<i>Park Entrance and Visitor Station (PEVS)</i>	The PEVS is located at the park entrance, accessed from Highway 169. The building houses the park office and visitor registration and information services.

LAND COVER

Table 2.26 lists the land cover for the entirety of Copper Falls State Park.

Table 2.26. Copper Falls State Park Land Cover

Habitat Classification	Acres	% Cover	Representative WisFIRS Cover Types
Upland Deciduous	3,264	78	Aspen, Northern Hardwoods
Upland Conifer	319	7	Black Spruce, Hemlock, Red Pine, Tamarack, White Pine, White Spruce
Developed	159	4	Campground, Developed Use, Parking Area, Picnic Area, Right of Way
Water	149	4	Minor Lake, Water
Upland Grass	65	2	Remnant Prairie – Mesic, Remnant Prairie – Mesic
Cliff/Outcrops	57	1	Rock Outcrops
Forested Wetland	57	1	Bottomland Hardwoods, Swamp Hardwoods, Tamarack, White Cedar, Ephemeral Pond
Open Wetland/Marsh	47	1	Emergent Wetland, Muskeg Bog
Shrub Wetland	45	1	Wetland Shrub, Alder, Willow
Upland Shrub	1	1	Upland Shrub



The land cover of Copper Falls State Park is diverse and highly dependent on topography. The Bad River travels through steep clay banks and sand bluffs that support Boreal Forest, Northern Dry-mesic Forest, hemlock-white cedar forest, and spring seeps. Low terraces between sharp meanders of the river have unique stands of lowland mesic forest dominated by sugar maple and basswood over a dense layer of ostrich fern, and Northern Dry-mesic Forests of white and red pine with sugar maple, red maple, and big-tooth aspen as canopy associates. Northern Mesic Forests (northern hardwoods), varying in size and age class, are dominated by sugar maple, basswood, and white ash, with hemlock and yellow birch as canopy associates and characterize most upland habitat away from the Bad River corridor.

Ephemeral Ponds are scattered in depressions within the mesic forests. Other wetlands include areas dominated by sedge meadow vegetation, some with standing dead white cedar and black ash; forested wetlands dominated by black ash with white cedar, yellow birch, and hemlock as canopy associates, and Poor Fens dominated by leather-leaf and few-seeded sedge. South of Loon Lake, a small peatland with a closed-canopy Black Spruce Swamp, dominated by black spruce and tamarack and an open Poor Fen characterized by few-seeded sedge over sphagnum moss, represents a rare wetland for the park. Murphy Lake is an eight-acre drainage lake with a receding shoreline of sedges and blue-joint grass.

NR 40 restricted species present in or around Copper Falls State Park are bishops goutweed, garlic mustard, Japanese barberry, creeping bellflower, knapweed, crown vetch, leafy and cypress spurge, yellow iris, Eurasian honeysuckles, wild parsnip, common buckthorn, tansy, garden valerian, and periwinkle.

MANAGEMENT AREAS AND CLASSIFICATIONS

This section details the future management, development, and use of Copper Falls State Park. The park is divided into four management areas, each with an NR 44 land management classification. Management areas include:

- Area 1: Copper Falls Day Use and Family Camping Recreation Management Area
- Area 2: Red Granite Recreation Management Area
- Area 3: Copper Falls Northern Recreation Management Area
- Area 4: Copper Falls State Natural Area Native Community Management Area

Property Wide Management

Apply Management for all State Parks of the Superior Coastal Plain (page 17) in addition to the following management objectives and prescriptions, which apply to all management areas within Copper Falls State Park.

Objectives

- Provide quality bicycling opportunities and encourage increased bicycle use to and throughout the park.

Common Elements

Apply General Property Management Practices and Recreation Facilities and their Management Common Elements.

Apply Habitats and their Management Common Elements. Reference Table 2.30 and Table 2.2 to determine applicable Common Elements. Management described in Common Elements, which conflicts with management described in this document is not applicable.

Guidance for use of Common Elements can be found on page 13. If management described in this plan conflicts with Common Elements, apply the management described in this document.



- Provide safe viewing of the waterfalls of the Tyler Forks and Bad Rivers while maintaining and enhancing the scenic quality of the park.
- Provide visitors quality opportunities to experience and learn about the park's historical and natural heritage.
- Maintain the natural community diversity of the park.

Prescriptions

- Evaluate opportunity to construct a moderately to fully-developed bicycle trail from the park's entrance area to the Doughboy's Trailhead Day Use Area, connecting North and South Campgrounds as part of the route. Construct if feasible.
- Collaborate with community partner efforts to develop a bicycle trail from the Town of Mellen to the park's entrance.
- Develop up to 15 additional primitive or semi-primitive hike-in or backpack campsites in accordance with visitor needs.
- Comply with all relevant state and federal codes when making improvements or repairs to buildings and areas that contribute to Copper Falls State Park's listing on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Unless otherwise noted, maintain all recreation and public use facilities at current development levels.
- Construct and maintain North Country Trail segments in accordance with the National Park Service's North Country National Scenic Trail standards (National Park Service, 1996).
- In appropriate areas, such as around backpack campsites, use a combination of active and passive management techniques to develop and maintain older forest characteristics, including larger diameter trees.
- To the degree feasible and practicable, design and conduct vegetation and other land management activities to maintain and enhance an attractive, natural appearing landscape. Use visual quality management techniques to minimize and rapidly reduce secondary, negative visual quality impacts of management activities.
- Consider natural community conservation, including Ephemeral Pond, Mesic Floodplain Terrace, Northern Dry-mesic Forest, and Northern Mesic Forest, when developing recreational and other public use opportunities. As feasible, ensure the integrity of natural communities.

Area 1: Copper Falls Day Use and Family Camping Recreation Management Area

Classification:	Recreation Management Area
Recreational Use Setting:	Type 4
Size:	347 acres

Copper Falls Day Use and Family Camping Recreation Management Area encompasses the more developed recreation areas of Copper Falls State Park. The area includes the park entrance and visitor station, campgrounds, day use areas and the popular Doughboy's trail. The area is managed primarily to provide safe, scenic recreation for groups, families, and individuals.

Table 2.27. Copper Falls Day Use and Family Camping Recreation Management Area Land Cover

Copper Falls Day Use and Family Camping Recreation Management Area		
Habitat Classification	Acres	% Cover
Upland Deciduous	146	42
Developed	87	25
Upland Conifer	38	11
Open Water	31	9
Upland Grass	23	7
Open Wetland/Marsh	11	3
Shrub Wetland	6	2
Forested Wetland	5	1

Area Management

Apply property-wide management (page 47) in addition to objectives and prescriptions for this management area.

Objectives

- Expand camping opportunities to meet visitor demands.
- Provide opportunities and space for indoor and outdoor public gatherings.

Prescriptions

- Maintain and enhance trails, bridges, and viewing platforms for public enjoyment of the park's most scenic areas.
- In accordance with visitor needs and as feasible, construct new modern family, modern group and rustic hike-in camping facilities. New camping facilities may include adding campground loops comparable in size to existing loops at North or South Campgrounds, or construction of a new campground within the management area. Up to three additional group camping facilities may be constructed within the management area. Prior to major campground expansion, follow the variance process under NR 44.04(4) to establish location of the expansion and receive public input on the planned expansion.
- Consider opportunities to construct a reservable shelter. Work with partners to fundraise and construct the shelter if considered a feasible project.

- Following a catastrophic event (e.g. wind, fire, ice damage, forest pests), salvage harvests may be completed throughout all management areas. Emphasis should be placed on short and long-term aesthetics and visitor safety when planning and conducting salvage operations.

Area 2: Red Granite Recreation Management Area

Classification:	Recreation Management Area
Recreational Use Setting:	Type 3
Size:	1,501

Red Granite Recreation Management Area consists of much of the southern portion of the park, separate from the more intensively used recreation areas covered by Area 1. Area 2 includes many of the park's trail-based recreational opportunities, including the majority of Red Granite Falls, Takesson, and Vahtera trails. The North Country Trail borders a portion of this management area. The group camp facility is also located within this management area.

The land cover of Area 2 is predominantly upland deciduous forest with some areas of upland coniferous forest present. Ephemeral ponds are scattered throughout. No substantive change in land cover is projected.

Table 2.28 Red Granite Recreation Management Area Land Cover

Copper Falls Type 3 Recreation Management Area		
Habitat Classification	Acres	% Cover
Upland Deciduous	1,189	79
Upland Conifer	121	8
Open Water	53	4
Developed	44	3
Upland Grass	35	2
Open Wetland/Marsh	24	2
Cliffs/Outcrops	15	1
Forested Wetland	13	1
Shrub Wetland	7	<1

Area Management

Apply property-wide management (page 47) in addition to objectives and prescriptions for this management area.

Objectives

- Maintain and enhance the natural appearing character of the management area to provide opportunities for solitude and remoteness while providing quality recreational opportunities.

Prescriptions

- Expand Vahtera trail uses to other nonmotorized recreational opportunities as appropriate. Follow the guidance in the multiple-use trail section (page 19).
- As visitor needs demand and as feasible, expand the current nonmotorized trail system following consultation between the property manager, district ecologist, and forester.
- In accordance with visitor needs and as feasible, add up to two additional rustic group camps and associated facilities, within the management area and using the same access road as the current facility.
- Thin trees around the observation tower as necessary to allow a full range of views for visitors.

- Use a combination of active and passive management techniques to develop new, and maintain existing, areas with older forest characteristics, including larger diameter trees, on suitable sites. Where appropriate and feasible, promote hemlock, white pine, and cedar stands.
- Where appropriate, allow for natural retention of coarse woody debris and standing snags.
- Following a catastrophic event (e.g. wind, fire, ice damage, forest pests), salvage harvests may be completed throughout all management areas. Emphasis should be placed on short and long-term aesthetics and visitor safety when planning and conducting salvage operations.

Area 3: Copper Falls Northern Recreation Management Area

Classification:	Recreation Management Area
Recreational Use Setting:	Type 2
Size:	837

Copper Falls Northern Recreation Management Area is in the more remote northern portion of the park. Few designated trails exist. Much of the area is covered in northern hardwoods, with some aspen and lowland shrub areas mixed in. Land cover in this management area is not anticipated to substantively change.

Table 2.29. Copper Falls Northern Recreation Management Area Land Cover

Copper Falls Northern Recreation Management Area		
Habitat Classification	Acres	% Cover
Upland Deciduous	692	83
Upland Conifer	67	8
Open Water	26	3
Shrub Wetland	24	3
Cliffs/Outcrops	10	1
Developed	10	1
Open Wetland/Marsh	5	<1
Upland Grass	3	<1

Area Management

Apply property-wide management (page 47) in addition to objectives and prescriptions for this management area.

Objectives

- Increase hiking access to this more remote portion of the park as desirable and feasible.
- Provide high-quality, naturally occurring, mixed-age deciduous forest habitat to support wildlife species, with an emphasis on aspen, maple, oak, and native conifers.

Prescriptions

- Follow requirements for recreation and land management activities given in NR 44.07(5), Wis. Adm. Code. Emphasis should be placed on maintaining a moderate to high perception of remoteness in all management activities.
- If appropriate given feasibility and visitor demands, develop a lightly-developed trail loop to increase access to the area. Develop any necessary hike-in campsite access trails as lightly developed trails.
- Conduct timber sales and other management techniques that mimic natural events to enhance aspen, maple, oak, other hardwood stands and native conifers, by reserving some mature maples, oaks and pines, and allowing some trees to mature and die within the forests as appropriate and feasible.
- Maintain structural diversity by providing large, fully-developed trees, standing snags and abundant coarse woody debris in appropriate areas.

- Following a catastrophic event (e.g. wind, fire, ice damage, forest pests), salvage harvest may be completed after consultation and direction by the district ecologist, forester and property manager.

Area 4: Copper Falls State Natural Area

Classification: Native Community Management Area
 Size: 750 acres

Copper Falls State Natural Area (SNA) is designated as a Native Community Management Area. The area features northern dry and dry-mesic forest along the shores of the meandering Bad River, which runs through the site. On the low terraces of the river are two oxbows, which support Dry-mesic Forest dominated by large white pine, sugar maple, red maple, and white ash. Other trees include hemlock, white cedar, paper birch, red oak, balsam fir, and white spruce. The understory is quite diverse due to the variation in topography. Characteristic groundlayer species are beaked hazelnut, American fly honeysuckle, wintergreen, partridgeberry, velvet-leaf blueberry, and many species of ferns. The steep slope along the west side of the river supports a sugar maple-hemlock forest, which has not been disturbed since at least 1916. Land cover for this site is not anticipated to change. Birds present in the natural area include blackburnian, black and white, Nashville, northern parula, and Canada warblers, ovenbird, American redstart, blue-headed vireo, hermit thrush, and common raven. The area was designated as an SNA in 2003.

Several recreational features exist including portions of the Doughboy's and North Country trails fall within the area, along with one other designated hiking trail. The backpack campsite, and its associated access trail are located on the east shore of the Bad River within the state natural area.

Table 2.30. Copper Falls State Natural Area Land Cover

Copper Falls State Natural Area		
Habitat Classification	Acres	% Cover
Upland Deciduous	554	74
Upland Conifer	96	13
Open Water	38	5
Cliffs/Outcrops	31	4
Forested Wetland	23	3
Developed	6	1
Open Wetland/Marsh	1	<1
Upland Grass	1	<1

Area Management

Apply property-wide management (page 47) in addition to objectives and prescriptions for this management area.

Objectives

- Manage for protection and perpetuation of the Northern Dry and Dry-mesic forests of the state natural area.
- Maintain visitor access to the SNA, particularly in areas along the Bad River and Tyler Forks gorges.

Prescriptions

- If visitor needs demand, allow for trail routes to be altered following consultation between the property manager and district ecologist.
- Maintain the backpack campsite as a primitive campsite (NR 44.07(5)(e)3, Wis. Adm. Code) development level. Up to two additional backpack campsites may be constructed within the area after consultation with and approval of the district ecologist.
- Except for invasive species control and visitor safety management practices, primarily allow natural processes to determine the structure of the forest and wetland cover. Use non-commercial, timber stand improvement techniques such as hand girdling to promote desirable tree species including white pine, sugar maple, red maple, white ash, hemlock, white cedar, paper birch, red oak, balsam fir, and white spruce.

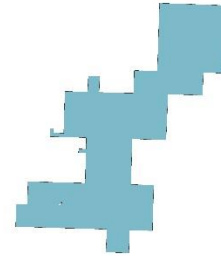
PATTISON STATE PARK

PROPERTY OVERVIEW

Pattison State Park, located 14 miles south of the city of Superior in northwest Douglas County, showcases large waterfalls along the Black River as it flows toward the Nemadji River and into Lake Superior. Big Manitou Falls is the highest waterfall in Wisconsin (165 feet high), and the fourth highest waterfall east of the Rocky Mountains. The park's highly erodible, red clay wetland soils in the park typify this region of Wisconsin.

Established in 1920 as a state park, this property has a storied history of copper exploration, logging, and preservation as parkland for the city of Superior, and notably as Camp Pattison for the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) during 1935-1942. The National Park Service supervised construction of the prominent buildings and trails of the park by the CCC enlistees, who were organized by the US Army (WDNR, 2008). Interfalls Lake was created prior

State Ownership:	1,521 acres
Fee Title:	1,521 acres
Easement:	0 acres



Maps

Click the links to access each map type in the online DNR Property Planning Viewer

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to establishment of the park, by a dam placed on the Black River around 1900 to form a small, 26-acre impoundment. It includes an artificial beachfront that has been maintained since the CCC first developed it for swimming access. A noteworthy CCC constructed building, located near the park entrance, features a reservable shelter and a nature center.

Abundant trails within the park provide opportunities for hiking, camping, fishing, hunting and trapping, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and wildlife observation. A five-mile portion of the 4,600 mile North Country National Scenic Trail weaves through Pattison State Park. The Brule-St. Croix Chapter of the North Country Trail Association helps manage the trail through an agreement with the department. North Country Trail Association raises donations and enlists the help of volunteers to build and maintain segments of the trail. Additionally, the Friends of Pattison and Amnicon Falls State Parks have played an important role in trail

improvement in recent years.

Special Attributes

In 2003, a State Natural Area was established to protect the unique river gorge carved out of both sandstone and basalt that includes the 165' high roaring, cascading falls of the Black River: Big Manitou Falls and Gorge. The State Natural Area is managed passively, allowing nature to determine the ecological characteristics (WDNR, 2018c).

Copper Creek Tributary is a designated Exceptional Resource Water (ch. NR 102.11 Wis. Admin Code). The property itself is a Wisconsin designated Land Legacy Place that identifies the Black River and Manitou Falls as a high-quality river system protecting a number of rare species and an important tributary to the Nemadji River. Wisconsin is at the southern limit of the range of the Boreal Forest, and this river and state park mark the separation between Boreal Forest habitat to the north and northern mesic and aspen forests to the south. (WDNR 2006; 2015).



EXISTING RECREATION CONDITIONS AND FACILITIES

Camping

Pattison State Park has one modern, 59-site family campground. All sites at the campground are accessible by motor vehicle as either pull-through or back-in sites. A shower and flush toilet facility is present.

The park's backpack camp area is near Little Manitou Falls, 1.6 miles from the main parking area. The backpack camp area is hike-in accessible only. The three backpack camping sites are classified as semi-primitive sites, compatible with the NR 44 Type 3 Recreational Use Setting.

Day Use Areas

Pattison State Park contains three day use areas. Each includes tables, grills, water, and rest rooms. Interfalls Lake and Little Manitou Falls Day Use Areas also contain play equipment. Interfalls Lake Day Use Area is the most extensive and also includes a beach, bathhouse, reservable shelter, and pet area.

Table 2.31. Pattison State Park Day Use Areas

Day Use Area	NR 44 Development Standard
Big Manitou Falls	Rustic
Interfalls Lake	Modern
Little Manitou Falls	Rustic

Trails

Pattison State Park has seven developed trails of various lengths and development levels.

Table 2.32. Pattison State Park Trails

Trail	Summer Use	Winter Use	Length (Miles)	NR 44 Trail Standard
Big Manitou Falls	Hiking	Hiking	0.5	Fully Developed
Backpack Campsite Trail Spur	Hiking	Hiking	0.1	Primitive
Beaver	Hiking	Hiking	2	Lightly Developed
Little Manitou Falls Trail	Hiking	Hiking	0.5	Lightly Developed
North Country Trail	Hiking	Hiking	4.5	Lightly Developed
Oak Ridge	Multiple -Use	Cross-country Skiing	0.8	Lightly Developed
Overlook	Multiple-Use	Cross-country Skiing	1.2	Lightly Developed
River View	Multiple-Use	Cross-country Skiing	2	Lightly Developed



Roads and Parking Areas

Pattison State Park contains thirteen parking lots, all paved. Table 2.33 shows the mileage of roads that offer access to Pattison State Park. Public, non-DNR roads mileage is calculated as the total of either the intersecting or adjacent portions of non-DNR maintained roads open to the public.

Table 2.33. Pattison State Park Roads

Road Classification	Non-DNR Public Roads	Open DNR Roads	Seasonal DNR Roads	Closed DNR Roads
Moderately-developed Road	0	1.2	0.3	0.1
Primitive Road	0	0.1	0	0
Fully-developed Road	12.7	0	0	0

Water Access

Pattison State Park contains the Black River, Interfalls Lake and Copper Creek. Interfalls Lake is near the park's main office and has a swimming beach on its northeast shore. The lake is formed by a dam on the Black River just upstream from Big Manitou Falls. The lake has one hike-in boat launch east of the main beach area. Copper Creek is accessible only via crossing a rugged landscape, absent of trails, by foot.

Support Facilities

Table 2.34. Pattison State Park Support Facilities

Support Facility	Description
CCC Enclosed Shelter	The CCC Enclosed Shelter is near the park office in the Interfalls Lake Day Use area. It is reservable year-round.
STH 35 Pedestrian Tunnel	The STH 35 tunnel serves as a pedestrian walk-way from the park office and Interfalls Lake area to various observation decks overlooking Big Manitou Falls and its associated gorge.
Sanitary Station	Facility provides camping unit potable water refilling and waste water disposal.

Other Recreation Facilities

Table 2.35. Other Pattison State Park Recreation Facilities

Recreation Facility	Description
Trail Shelter	The three-sided trail shelter is located east of Little Manitou Falls off the Oak Ridge Trail. The shelter can be used by hikers and cross-country skiers – including those traversing the North Country National Scenic Trail.
Interfalls Lake Beach	The Interfalls Lake Beach is a main feature of the Interfalls Lake Day Use Area and is used by visitors to the park for swimming.
Observation Platforms	Two waterfall and gorge viewing platforms exist on the north side of the Black River, west of State Highway 35. Additionally, three overlooks are on the south side of Big Manitou gorge. The main overlook on the south side of the gorge is ADA accessible and is near the Big Manitou Picnic Area. Two overlooks, one of which is ADA accessible, are present near Little Manitou Falls.

LAND COVER

Pattison State Park is covered by a mix of upland hardwoods and conifers, lowlands (forested and shrub), grasslands, streams, and developed areas. High priority or important natural community types include boreal forest, northern mesic forest, and dry cliff. Of the upland deciduous land cover type, 82% is made up of aspen and northern hardwoods.

Several NR40 restricted plant species exist in and near the Pattison State Park property. Known restricted plant species include; Japanese barberry, creeping bellflower, Eurasian honeysuckles, common buckthorn, black locust, tansy, and garden valerian. Table 2.36 lists the land cover for the park.

Table 2.36. Pattison State Park Land Cover

Habitat Classification	Acres	% Cover	WisFIRS Cover Types Present
Upland Broad-leaved Deciduous Forest	975	66	Aspen, Northern Hardwoods, White Birch, Oak
Forested Wetland	225	15	Bottomland Hardwoods, Swamp Hardwoods, White Cedar
Developed	69	5	Campground, Parking Area, Picnic Area, Right of Way
Water	53	4	Minor Lake, Minor Stream
Upland Coniferous Forest	51	3	Balsam Fir, Red Pine, White Pine, White Spruce
Upland Grass	33	2	Remnant Prairie – Dry Mesic
Upland Shrub	27	2	Upland Shrub
Shrub Wetland	21	1	Wetland Shrub – Alder
Cliffs/Outcrops	20	1	Rock Outcrops

MANAGEMENT AREAS, CLASSIFICATIONS AND MANAGEMENT

This section details the future management, development, and use of Pattison State Park. The park is divided into three management areas, each with an NR 44 land management classification. Management areas include:

- Area 1: Pattison Day Use and Camping Recreation Management Area
- Area 2: Pattison Type 3 Recreation Management Area
- Area 3: Pattison Northeast Recreation Management Area
- Area 4: Big Manitou Falls and Gorge SNA Native Community Management Area
- Area 5: Pattison Mesic Forest Native Community Management Area
- Area 6: Copper Creek Falls Native Community Management Area

Property Wide Management

Apply Management for all State Parks of the Superior Coastal Plain (page 17) in addition to the following management objectives and prescriptions; which apply to all management areas within Pattison State Park.

Objectives

- Provide a safe visitor experience for those seeking to experience the beauty of Pattison State Park's waterfalls, rivers, gorges and surrounding landscape in a sustainable, aesthetically pleasing manner.

Prescriptions

- Unless otherwise indicated within specific management areas, maintain existing facilities at current development levels to provide existing recreational opportunities. Do not change level of development, open and closed status, or miles of roads.
- Explore opportunities to develop additional, nonmotorized recreational facilities including mountain and fat tire biking. Develop facilities if feasible and consistent with the land management classification of an area.
- Construct and maintain North Country Trail segments in accordance with the National Park Service's North Country National Scenic Trail standards (National Park Service, 1996).
- Evaluate feasibility of a walking bridge north of CTH B, to allow visitors access to viewing opportunities on the west side of Big Manitou Gorge without walking on the highway shoulder. Construct if bridge is both feasible and does not negatively impact the aesthetics or natural communities of Big Manitou Gorge.

Common Elements

Apply General Property Management Practices and Recreation Facilities and their Management Common Elements.

Apply Habitats and their Management Common Elements. Reference Table 2.36 and Table 2.2 to determine applicable Common Elements. Management described in Common Elements, which conflicts with management described in this document is not applicable.

Guidance for use of Common Elements can be found on page 13. If management described in this plan conflicts with Common Elements, apply the management described in this document.

Area 1: Pattison Day Use and Camping Recreation Management Area

Classification:	Recreation Management Area
Recreational Use Setting:	Type 4
Size:	233 acres

Pattison Day Use and Camping Recreation Management Area is the most intensively used area of the park from a recreation standpoint. The northern portion includes the family campground, Big Manitou Falls viewing decks, park office, Interfalls Lake Beach and a large day use area. The management area follows Highway 35 to the south and includes the Little Manitou Falls day use and viewing areas. Trails in this management area include portions of Big Manitou Falls, Beaver, Little Manitou Falls and North Country trails.

This management area was heavily impacted by the June 2018 floods. The Interfalls Lake dam was washed out and the lake drained. The flood waters also washed out large portions of all trails within this management area, including the fully-developed Big Manitou Falls trail. The rebuilding efforts have yielded several re-routes of existing trails and an improved dam.

Forested areas are largely composed of oak and other upland deciduous and conifer stand types. The lowlands are covered in forested wetlands and some areas of shrub exist, especially near Highway 35. No substantial changes in land cover are anticipated.

Table 2.37. Pattison Day Use and Camping Recreation Management Area Land Cover

Pattison Day Use and Camping Recreation Management Area		
Habitat Classification	Acres	% Cover
Upland Deciduous	96	41
Developed	63	27
Forested Wetland	31	13
Upland Grass	21	9
Shrub Wetland	16	7
Upland Conifer	4	2
Open Water	2	1

Area Management

Apply property-wide management (page 62) in addition to objectives and prescriptions for this management area.

Objectives

- Provide quality waterfalls viewing, camping, hiking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, swimming, and other nonmotorized recreational opportunities.
- Provide opportunities and space for indoor and outdoor public gatherings.
- Maintain and enhance the natural, rustic appearing character of the management area to provide opportunities for solitude and remoteness.

Prescriptions

- Evaluate feasibility of constructing a gazebo or shelter building within the Interfalls Lake day use area. Work with partners to fundraise and construct if feasible.
- Evaluate feasibility of working with partners to construct up to one ADA camper cabin with electricity along the campground road between the sanitary station and campsite #34. Construct as feasible.
- In accordance with visitor needs and as feasible, construct new modern family and modern group camping facilities. New camping facilities may include adding one campground loop comparable in size to the current family campground. Up to one additional group camping facilities may be constructed within the management area either near the existing family campground or in the Little Manitou Falls area near the existing well and toilet facility. Prior to major campground expansion or group site construction, follow the variance process under NR 44.04(4) to establish location of the expansion and receive public input.
- Work with partners to maintain pedestrian tunnel under STH 35.
- Where appropriate and feasible, such as in camping and other public use areas, use a combination of active and passive management techniques to develop and maintain older forest characteristics, including larger diameter trees, on suitable sites. Allow for natural retention of coarse woody debris and standing snags where appropriate.

Area 2: River View Recreation Management Area

Classification:	Recreation Management Area
Recreational Use Setting:	Type 3
Size:	560 acres

River View Recreation Management Area is the largest management area of the park. It contains portions of all trails listed in Table 2.38. The area also contains the trail shelter, backpack camping area, and CCC bridge. From a recreation standpoint, this management area serves primarily nonmotorized trail uses. In winter, cross-country skiing is especially popular.

The River View Recreation Management Area is primarily upland deciduous cover, with areas of forested wetland also well-represented, especially in the southern portions of the management area. No substantial changes in land cover are projected.

Table 2.38. River View Recreation Management Area Land Cover

River View Recreation Management Area		
Habitat Classification	Acres	% Cover
Upland Deciduous	319	57
Forested Wetland	169	30
Open Water	46	8
Developed	8	2
Upland Conifer	7	1
Shrub Wetland	6	1
Upland Grass	5	1

Area Management

Apply property-wide management (page 62) in addition to objectives and prescriptions for this management area.

Objectives

- Provide quality hike-in and backpack camping facilities in conjunction with the trail-based recreational opportunities in this management area.

Prescriptions

- Maintain hiking, snowshoeing, and cross-country ski trails at current development levels, while rerouting trails as necessary to mitigate future washouts.
- Maintain backpack camp areas and trail shelter at current development levels. Evaluate the addition of up to 10 additional primitive or semi-primitive (NR 44.07(6)(e)2, Wis. Adm. Code) backpack campsites within the management area as visitor needs demand.
- In appropriate areas, such as around backpack campsites, trails, and other higher use areas, use a combination of active and passive management techniques to develop and maintain older forest characteristics, including larger diameter trees.

- As compatible with recreational activities and management, provide high-quality, naturally occurring, mixed-age deciduous forest habitat to support wildlife species, with an emphasis on maple, aspen, oak, and native conifers. Preserve hemlock and cedar where present.
- As appropriate, conduct timber sales and other management techniques that mimic natural events to enhance aspen, oak, other hardwood stands and native conifers in upland stands, by reserving some mature oaks and pines, and allowing some trees to mature and die within the forests.
- Implement forestry best management practices to control soil erosion during active forest management activities, including forest management guidelines developed for the Lake Superior Clay Plain that promote limiting the amount of open lands to prevent accelerated runoff to stream channels.
- In appropriate areas, maintain structural diversity by providing large, fully-developed trees, standing snags and abundant coarse woody debris.
- Following a catastrophic event (e.g. wind, fire, ice damage, forest pests), salvage harvests may be completed throughout all management areas. Emphasis should be placed on short and long-term aesthetics and visitor safety when planning and conducting salvage operations.

Area 3: Pattison Northeast Recreation Management Area

Classification:	Recreation Management Area
Recreational Use Setting:	Type 3
Size:	478 acres

Pattison Northeast Recreation Management Area composes most of the northeast portion of the park, north of CTH B. The management area is composed primarily upland deciduous forest with small patches of shrub, grassland, and upland conifer mixed in. Land cover is not anticipated to substantially change.

This management area has no facilities and access is limited only to foot travel with no designated trails. The plan proposes the addition of mountain bike and hiking trails to add to the recreational opportunities of the park and increasing access to a historically underutilized area.

Table 2.39. Pattison Northeast Recreation Management Area

Pattison Northeast Recreation Management Area		
Habitat Classification	Acres	% Cover
Upland Deciduous	410	86
Shrub/Savanna	27	6
Upland Conifer	15	3
Cliffs/Outcrops	13	3
Upland Grass	10	2
Developed	3	<1

Area Management

Apply property-wide management (page 62) in addition to objectives and prescriptions for this management area.

Objectives

- Provide a system of nonmotorized trail recreational opportunities, including for mountain biking and hiking while maintaining a perception of remoteness.
- As compatible with recreational activities and management, provide high-quality, naturally occurring, mixed-age forest habitat to support wildlife species, with an emphasis on aspen, maple, oak, and native conifers.

Prescriptions

- Develop primitive to lightly-developed hiking opportunities from the Interfalls Lake Day Use Area to Copper Creek Falls Native Community Management Area.
- Assess opportunity to develop a nonmotorized multi-use trail system, with an emphasis on mountain biking, with water crossings where appropriate throughout the management area. Ensure trail system connects to the campground and construct trails and appropriate parking areas if feasible.

- Apply water quality best management practices when constructing trails. Ensure that trail system does not add more erosion or water channeling to the Copper Creek system.
- In appropriate areas, use a combination of active and passive management techniques to develop and maintain older forest characteristics, including larger diameter trees. Where practical and appropriate allow for natural retention of coarse woody debris and standing snags.
- Maintain and allow areas of native upland conifer to naturally increase as compatible with management area public use goals.
- To the degree feasible and practicable, design and conduct vegetation and other land management activities to maintain and enhance an attractive, natural appearing landscape. Use visual quality management techniques to minimize and rapidly reduce secondary, negative visual quality impacts of management activities.

Area 4: Big Manitou Falls and Gorge State Natural Area

Classification: Native Community Management Area

Size: 35 acres

Big Manitou Falls and Gorge SNA features a unique river gorge carved out of both sandstone and basalt and includes the 165' high roaring, cascading falls of the Black River. Predominantly good-quality Boreal Forest with Northern Mesic Forest elements and cliff communities within the gorge characterize this SNA. The canopy is dominated by white spruce, red pine, white pine, northern white-cedar, paper birch, and red oak. The shrub and sapling layer includes Canadian yew, round-leaved dogwood, balsam fir, mountain and red maple. The groundlayer is dominated by ferns along the cliffs and forest herbs including large-leaved aster, American spikenard, columbine, and thimbleberry.

The waterfalls and gorge are among the most popular features of the park. Many viewing opportunities exist along the edge of the gorge, primarily outside the management area.

Table 2.40. Big Manitou Falls and Gorge SNA Land Cover

Big Manitou Falls and Gorge State Natural Area		
Habitat Classification	Acres	% Cover
Upland Conifer	22	63
Upland Deciduous	7	20
Open Water	6	17

Area Management

Apply property-wide management (page 62) in addition to objectives and prescriptions for this management area.

Objectives

- Protect and enhance the Boreal Forest, Northern Mesic Forest and cliff communities of the management area.
- Foster viewing opportunities on the upper rim of the gorge while discouraging access into the lower portions of management area.

Prescriptions

- Maintain and improve viewing opportunities on the rim of Big Manitou Gorge. Do not develop trails or other recreational facilities within Big Manitou Gorge.
- Except for invasive species control and visitor safety management practices, primarily allow natural processes to determine the structure of the forest and wetland cover. Use non-commercial, timber stand improvement techniques such as hand girdling to promote desirable tree species including white pine, sugar maple, red maple, white ash, hemlock, white cedar, paper birch, red oak, balsam fir, and white spruce.

Area 5: Pattison Mesic Forest Native Community Management Area

Classification:	Native Community Management Area
Recreational Use Setting:	Type 3
Size:	148 acres

A Northern Mesic Forest with mature, uneven-aged closed canopy of large diameter trees is the basis for the Pattison Mesic Forest Habitat Management Area. The forest is a mix of characteristic hardwood and conifer tree species. Good -quality, older aged rich Northern Mesic Forests are extremely rare in Douglas County and the Superior Coastal Plain. Several species of greatest conservation need occur in this forest.

Accompanying the Northern Mesic Forest community are the River View and Oak Ridge trails along with a short (0.1 mile) connector trail. These lightly-developed trails are multiple-use during the summer and part of very popular cross-country ski loops during the winter.

Table 2.41. Pattison Mesic Forest Native Community Management Area Land Cover

Pattison Mesic Forest		
Habitat Classification	Acres	% Cover
Upland Deciduous	106	72
Forested Wetland	37	25
Upland Conifer	5	3

Area Management

Apply property-wide management (page 62) in addition to objectives and prescriptions for this management area.

Objectives

- Maintain excellent trail-based, nonmotorized recreational opportunities on the River View and Oak Ridge trails.
- Sustainably manage Northern-Mesic Forest community areas in conjunction with meeting the recreation needs of visitors.

Prescriptions

- Maintain recreational trails at current development levels (Table 2.32). New trails and rerouting of existing trails within the management area are allowed following consultation between the property manager, district ecologist and forester.
- Use a combination of active and passive management techniques to develop new, and maintain existing, areas of rich Northern Mesic Forest. When possible, maintain closed canopy (70-90%) cover.
- Where appropriate, allow for natural retention of coarse woody debris and standing snags.
- Following a catastrophic event (e.g. wind, fire, ice damage, forest pests), salvage harvests may be completed throughout the management area after consultation and direction by the district ecologist, forester and property manager.

Area 6: Copper Creek Falls Native Community Management Area

Classification:	Native Community Management Area
Recreational Use Setting:	Type 2
Size:	66 acres

Copper Creek Falls Habitat Management Area surrounds the falls and gorge of Copper Creek, an Outstanding Resource Water. The management area protects the rare natural communities and associated habitat found in and around the gorge.

Table 2.42. Copper Creek Falls Native Community Management Area

Copper Creek Falls Native Community Management Area		
Habitat Classification	Acres	% Cover
Upland Deciduous	59	89
Cliffs/Outcrops	7	11

Area Management

Apply property-wide management (page 62) in addition to objectives and prescriptions for this management area.

Objectives

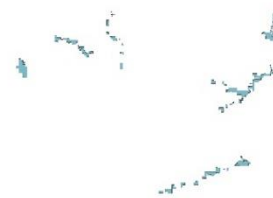
- Provide opportunity to safely view Copper Creek Falls and the associated gorge while protecting natural communities, including Dry Cliff.
- Restore Boreal Forest throughout the management area, as appropriate and feasible.

Prescriptions

- Develop a primitive hiking trail extending from the Northeast Recreation Management Area and including a new, minimally developed viewing area at Copper Creek Falls. The trail's footprint should be limited to preserve feeling of remoteness and protect natural communities.
- Limit Copper Creek Falls viewing development should to minimal vegetation clearing for falls viewing opportunities in appropriate areas. Falls viewing opportunities developed should not substantially impact the surrounding viewshed or ecology.
- Use a combination of passive and active management to reduce aspen dominance throughout the site and maintain and restore Boreal Forest characteristics. Active management techniques may include planting characteristic Boreal Forest species such as white pine, white spruce and northern white cedar.

South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area

This property epitomizes the vision and goals for the Superior Coastal Plain properties. From wetland community types surrounding numerous coastal tributaries of Lake Superior, to exposed bedrock, cliffs, northern hardwoods and conifer-dominated older forests, almost all of the northern Wisconsin priority habitats for DNR management occur at this fishery area. These units protect the environment that supports the region's coldwater fishery resources.



PROPERTY OVERVIEW

The South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area consists of six management units located along multiple streams in Bayfield County. The property preserves a large, self-sustaining potadromous fishery (freshwater migration) that includes brown trout, coho salmon, steelhead/rainbow trout, and brook trout. The parcels contain unique stream and coastal habitats associated with Lake Superior tributaries and some of the deepest sand aquifers in Wisconsin, which provide cold, high-quality groundwater.

State Ownership:	8,033 acres
Fee Title:	7,964 acres
Easement:	69 acres

[Maps](#)

Click the links to access each map type in the online DNR Property Planning Viewer

[DNR & Other Lands](#)

[Recreation](#)

[Roads](#)

[Land Cover](#)

[Land Management Classification](#)

The project's units are:

- Sioux River Unit
- Fish Creek Unit
- Pikes Creek Unit
- Flag River Unit
- Iron River Unit
- Cranberry River Unit

[Special Attributes](#)

More than 50% of the self-sustaining potadromous fishery on the Wisconsin shore of Lake Superior is protected by South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area.

The property falls within an Important Bird Area, recognized for providing high quality breeding bird habitat and areas that are used as a migratory bird stopover site (Steele, 2007). The property is also within the Coastal Headlands and Estuaries COA and the Fish Creek COA, as described in the Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan (WDNR, 2015a). Numerous streams within the boundaries of the fishery area are classified as Outstanding or Exceptional Resource Waters.

Wetland community types along with the exposed bedrock and cliffs on these properties are known to contain uncommon species of both plants and wildlife. The existing conifer-dominated Boreal Forest is one example of an uncommon, priority management community type.



PUBLIC USE AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Recreation opportunities include fishing, hunting, trapping hiking, cross-country skiing, and wildlife viewing across the entire property. Snowmobiling is allowed on designated trails.

Trails

The Salmo Trail, a joint effort between DNR and partner agencies, is a 0.5-mile trail within the Pikes Creek Unit of South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area. The trail is moderately developed and offers access from State Highway 13 to the Lake Superior shoreline. The trail crosses Pikes Creek and offers fishing opportunities along its path to Lake Superior. Many other unmapped, unofficial trails exist throughout the property, usually from parking areas to waterways. These trails are undeveloped and not maintained.

Water Access

One of the main purposes of South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area is to offer access to streams, rivers, and Lake Superior for angling and other recreational purposes. Most of the property borders or encompasses waterbodies. The property offers access via foot travel to many of the region's premier waterways.

Two boat launch facilities exist within the South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area: one carry-in launch at the Sioux River Unit, and one back-in launch at the Fish Creek Unit. Numerous other launches, both DNR and non-DNR managed, exist near the South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area.

Land Use and Partner Agreements

Local snowmobile clubs have land use agreements with the department for the use and maintenance of snowmobile trails (gated/closed during summer) on the Flag River and Sioux River units.

Bayfield County has a land use agreement with the department for continued use of a camping area on the Sioux River unit, that shares a boundary with the Big Rock Campground.

Roads and Parking Areas

South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area contains 25 parking areas. Over 22 miles of public, non-DNR roads are adjacent to or cross the property and provide access. Table 2.43 provides a summary of road access to and within the property.

Table 2.43. South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area Road Access

NR 44 Road Classification	Miles of Roads		
	Open DNR Roads	Closed DNR Roads	Seasonal DNR Roads
Primitive	0.5	3.1	0
Lightly Developed	0.1	0	0
Moderately Developed	0.2	0.6	0.2
Fully Developed	0	0	0

LAND COVER

Table 2.44 lists the habitat classifications (land cover) for the entirety of the South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area. Land cover for the entire property includes many wetland community types surrounding the coastal tributaries of Lake Superior, exposed bedrock, cliffs, northern hardwoods, aspen and conifer-dominated older forests. Almost all the priority habitats for DNR management for the northern region are represented here. Small, non-substantive, changes in land cover may occur as areas of upland deciduous convert to longer-lived conifer species. These changes are expected to be minor and are not shown in Table 2.44.

Table 2.44. South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area Land Cover

South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area			
Habitat Classification	GIS Acres	% Cover	Representative WisFIRS Cover Types
Upland Deciduous	3910	50	Aspen, Oak, Northern Hardwoods, Red Maple
Upland Conifer	1252	16	Balsam Fir, White Spruce, Hemlock, Red Pine, White Pine
Forested Wetland	1111	14	Black Spruce, Swamp Hardwoods, Tamarack, White Cedar
Shrub Wetland	403	5	Alder
Open Wetlands/Marsh	381	5	Emergent Wetland
Upland Grass	308	4	Remnant Sand Prairie, Remnant Dry-Mesic Prairie
Open Water	267	3	Lake, Stream
Upland Shrub	122	1	Upland Shrub
Developed	115	1	Right-of-Way
Great Lakes Coastal	10	<1	Great Lakes Beach

MANAGEMENT AREAS, CLASSIFICATIONS AND MANAGEMENT

Management Areas and Classifications

South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area is composed of 11 management areas:

- Area 1: Sioux River & Fourmile Creek Habitat Management Area
- Area 2: Big Rock Pines State Natural Area Natural Community Management Area
- Area 3: Sioux River Bayview Beach Recreation Management Area
- Area 4: Fish Creek Unit Habitat Management Area
- Area 5: Les Voigt State Fish Hatchery Special Management Area
- Area 6: Pikes Creek Habitat Management Area
- Area 7: North Pikes Creek Boreal Forest State Natural Area Natural Community Management Area
- Area 8: Flag River Habitat Management Area
- Area 9: Port Wing Boreal Forest State Natural Area Natural Community Management Area
- Area 10: Iron River Habitat Management Area
- Area 11: Cranberry River Habitat Management Area

Management Objectives and Prescriptions for South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area

The following objectives and prescriptions apply to all management areas within the South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area. If management objectives within an individual management area conflict with entire property objectives, follow individual management area objectives.

Objectives

- Maintain and increase long-lived coniferous species (white pine, red pine, white spruce, and northern white cedar) for their key role in stream flow management with long rotation lengths, interception of snow, and shading of the forest floor during spring thaws; reducing peak flow by slowing snow melt.
- Manage forests to protect stream channel integrity, particularly during peak flow conditions from precipitation and snowmelt.
- Protect the deep sand aquifers and associated effluent springs endemic to the property and its resources.
- Manage for native plant communities.
- Maintain consistency with the fisheries management objectives described in the Lake Superior Fisheries Management Plan and with the goals and objectives of the Lake Superior Lakewide Action and Management Plan (LAMP).
- Work with partners to manage property and contributing watersheds to enhance and protect coastal tributaries and their supporting habitats.
- Provide public recreation and education opportunities, such as fishing, hunting, trapping, gathering, hiking, nature education and photography compatible with the property's ecological capabilities.

- Whenever possible, provide experience of remoteness for anglers, hunters, hikers, and other property users.

Prescriptions

- Implement “slow-the-flow” principles described in “Managing Woodlands on Lake Superior’s Red Clay Plain: Slowing the Flow of Runoff” (Shy & Wagner, 2007) or its replacement document when conducting forestry operations, such as timber harvest, to reduce stormwater runoff and desynchronize snowmelt runoff.
- Implement, maintain, and refine forestry best management practices to control soil erosion during active forest management activities, including forest management guidelines developed for the Lake Superior Clay Plain that promote limiting the amount of open lands to prevent accelerated runoff to stream channels.
- Where appropriate and feasible, encourage long-lived conifer forests via under-planting to establish late-successional, species-rich communities that are resilient and self-sustaining in the event of natural disturbance. In appropriate areas, use passive management to accomplish these goals.
- Firewood cutting, bough harvest, Christmas tree harvest and other non-timber forest product activities covered under Forest Product Permits are generally not permitted. In the case of a special project or catastrophic event, the property manager (or designee) may issue a Forest Products Permit in conjunction with recovery or project efforts only after consultation among the property manager, district ecologist, wildlife biologist and forester.¹
- Seek to work with adjacent land owners toward landscape-level land and water management to maintain and further protect the valuable resources of the fishery area
- Vary rotation length among aspen stands across the property to create greater age class distribution.
- Control non-native and invasive species using best management practices and repopulate with native species when possible.
- Evaluate the feasibility of increased signage related to non-native, noxious or poisonous species such as poison sumac and poison ivy. Install and maintain signs, as necessary.

Common Elements

Apply General Property Management Practices and Recreation Facilities and their Management Common Elements.

Apply Habitats and their Management Common Elements. Reference Table 2.44 and Table 2.2 to determine applicable Common Elements. Management described in Common Elements, which conflicts with management described in this document is not applicable.

Guidance for use of Common Elements can be found on page 13. If management described in this plan conflicts with Common Elements, apply the management described in this document.

¹ Timber harvesting that does take place on South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area intentionally leaves dead and down wood for wildlife habitat and other ecosystem functions. Removing this wood is outside the intent of the harvest and harms valuable habitat. This prescription is included in the plan to ensure timber harvests are only those meant to enhance the overall objective of the property: to protect fish and wildlife habitat and enhance the water quality of the area’s streams.

- Maintain existing parking areas, trails, and boat launches to facilitate public access for fishing and hunting. Experience of remoteness should be considered when conducting trail maintenance; place high value on aesthetic management.
- As necessary to protect and foster public access or enhance upland, riparian, and instream habitat integrity, consider purchasing, trading, or selling parcels within project boundaries.
- Maintain the forested status of sand aquifer recharge areas.

Individual management area sections of the plan describe additional objectives and prescriptions.

Area 1: Sioux River & Fourmile Creek Habitat Management Area

Classification:	Habitat Management Area
Size:	2,040 acres
Unit:	Sioux River

The Sioux River and Fourmile Creek Management Area is a subset of the Sioux River Unit. It spans much of the Sioux River corridor from County Highway C downstream to Lake Superior, including the lower half of the Fourmile Creek corridor (County Highway C downstream to Sioux River) and the lower reach of the Little Sioux River. The management area connects these streams with their headwater lands, which are also publicly-owned by Bayfield County and the US Forest Service. Much of the upland landscape is forested, with relatively dense stands of deciduous and coniferous species such as aspen, various northern and swamp hardwoods, white pine, spruce, and fir. The riparian woody vegetation consists of speckled alder and interspersed herbaceous and other woody species. Predominant throughout the management area is the aquifer, which emerges as effluent springs throughout the stream valleys.

Special Attributes

The Sioux River and Fourmile Creek Habitat Management Area contains the Big Rock Hole fish refuge. The refuge extends from the deep hole at the base of the cascades downstream 200 feet, adjacent to Big Rock Pines State Natural Area. The refuge is posted and prohibits fishing from September 1 through May 31 to protect lake-run salmonids during their spawning migrations. The management area also falls within an Important Bird Area as habitat for breeding birds and migratory bird stopover site (Steele, 2007).

Management Area Land Cover

Land Cover for Sioux River and Fourmile Creek Habitat Management Area is shown in Table 2.45. The cover is not predicted to change.

Table 2.45. Sioux River and Fourmile Creek Habitat Management Area Land Cover

Sioux River and Fourmile Creek Habitat Management Area		
Habitat Classification	GIS Acres	% Cover
Upland Deciduous Forest	965	51
Upland Coniferous Forest	454	24
Upland Grass	161	9
Forested Wetland	117	6
Upland Shrub	88	5
Open Water	50	3
Shrub Wetland	25	1
Developed	25	1
Open Wetland/Marsh	12	>1

Area Management

Apply “Management Objectives and Prescriptions for South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area” (page 75) and area-specific objectives and prescriptions.

Objectives

- Maintain Big Rock Hole fish refuge as a protected area for lake-run salmonids during spawning.

Prescriptions

- Inspect fish refuge signage throughout the year, especially during fish refuge season. Repair and replace signs as necessary.

Area 2: Big Rock Pines State Natural Area

Classification: Native Community Management Area
 Size: 159 acres
 Unit: Sioux River

The diversity of exemplary natural communities and uncommon species habitat that occurs on this management area warrants recognition as a State Natural Area. The Northern Dry-Mesic Conifer Forest with clay seepage bluffs and forested seeps are among the very best in the state.

The Big Rock Pines State Natural Area is proposed for this management area. This site encompasses a relatively large block of mature, natural-origin red and white pine forest, which is rare throughout northern Wisconsin, particularly on the Superior Coastal Plain. The stand is nearly 120 years old, with some trees likely older. This mature Dry-Mesic Conifer Forest in conjunction with the ravines, forested seeps, clay seepage bluffs, and river corridor create a unique juxtaposition of high-quality communities. The long-term goal for this site is to provide an example of an older-age class red and white pine stand.

Management Area Land Cover

The entirety of Big Rock Pines State Natural Area is upland conifer. No change in land cover is predicted.

Table 2.46. Big Rock Pines SNA Land Cover

Big Rock Pines SNA		
Habitat Classification	GIS Acres	% Cover
Upland Conifer	159	100

Area Management

Apply “Management Objectives and Prescriptions for South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area” (page 75) and area-specific objectives and prescriptions. Common Elements for habitat management are not applicable in this management area.

Objectives

- Protect Dry-mesic Conifer Forest, Clay Seepage Bluffs, and Forested Seeps natural community types.
- Maintain older-age classes of red and white pine-dominated forest.

Prescriptions

- In general, allow natural processes to determine the ecological characteristics of the management area. Timber stand improvement projects such as prescribed burning, limited tree cutting, girdling and spot treatments of herbicides may be used, when doing so will assist in maintaining or increasing representation of long-lived conifer species. Other practices may include salvage and replanting trees following natural disturbance events such as wildfire or blow down.
- Monitor and control invasive species per department protocol in Common Elements, which may include the use of herbicides.

Area 3: Sioux River Bayview Beach Management Area

Classification:	Recreation Management Area
Recreation Sub-classification	Type 3
Size:	92 acres
Unit:	Sioux River

The Sioux River Bayview Beach Management Area encompasses a wetland and beach complex at the Sioux River mouth. A predominant feature of this management area is the aquifer, which emerges as effluent springs throughout the stream valleys. The area is composed of Emergent Marsh and Alder Thicket adjoining a narrow, mile-long open peaty swale between two parallel sandspits. The swale includes both a coastal Poor Fen as well as Great Lakes Shore Fen. The beach ridges are forested with white and red pines, balsam fir, and paper birch. The open peatlands of the swale are composed of Sphagnum mosses, ericaceous shrubs, and sedges, with scattered small tamarack. Wet areas support a mat of woolly sedge, with buckbean, sweet gale and water horsetail. Dominant species include bur-reeds, soft-stemmed bulrush, cattails, lake sedge, and water arum. West of Highway 13, the marsh is heavily dominated by cattail.

The sandy beach near the shore is a popular swimming location. The department provides a parking area and many people park along Friendly Valley Road to access the beach, keeping wetland disturbances to a minimum. The area is known to contain five rare plants and one rare bird. A state endangered plant occurring within this management area may be the only known remaining population in the state. Use of the site by migratory birds can be significant, especially in the spring. Though relatively small and constrained by the state highway and a railroad grade, this site contains significant wetland communities.

Table 2.47. Sioux River Bayview Beach Recreation Management Area

Sioux River Bayview Beach Recreation Management Area		
Habitat Classification	GIS Acres	% Cover
Open Wetland/Marsh	63	81
Great Lakes Coastal	10	14
Shrub Wetland	4	5

Area Management

Apply “Management Objectives and Prescriptions for South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area” (page 75) and area-specific objectives and prescriptions.

Objectives

- Preserve coastal wetland natural community types while accommodating compatible beach and shoreline recreation and education opportunities.

Prescriptions

- Monitor recreational use of area and take steps to reduce overuse impacts, especially on areas outside of developed parking, roads and beach.
- Encourage public education efforts regarding coastal wetlands and rare natural community conservation.

- Work with partners, including Township and Wisconsin Department of Transportation, as appropriate, to implement management and protection efforts and to monitor water quality, rare species, and control invasive plant species.
- Monitor and control invasive species per department protocol in Common Elements, which may include the use of herbicides.

Area 4: Fish Creek Unit Habitat Management Area

Classification:	Habitat Management Area
Size:	1,919 acres
Unit:	Fish Creek

The Fish Creek Unit of South Shore Lake Superior Fishery area is entirely within this management area. The unit includes numerous segments of North Fish Creek from U.S. Highway 2 downstream to Lake Superior. These segments exist in a geologically referenced transition zone between the creek headwaters and lowland areas near Lake Superior. The transition zone contains abundant spawning substrates for lake-run salmonid fish species.

Much of the upland landscape is forested, with relatively dense stands of deciduous and coniferous species such as aspen, various northern and swamp hardwoods, white pine, spruce, and fir. The riparian woody vegetation consists of speckled alder and interspersed herbaceous and other woody species. The aquifer is predominant throughout the management area and emerges as effluent springs throughout the stream valleys.

Special Attributes

The drowned mouth of Fish Creek and its associated wetlands at the head of Chequamegon Bay is particularly dynamic, owing to the funnel shape of Chequamegon Bay and the seiche activity that causes frequent, and sometimes substantial, short-term water level changes. The primary wetland communities are emergent marsh, shrub swamp, and hardwood swamp. The open waters of the sloughs are also an important feature. The emergent marsh occupies several hundred acres close to the creek mouth. Important species include bur-reeds, bulrushes, lake sedge, arrowhead and water sedge. Beds of submergent and floating-leaved aquatic macrophytes occur in the open waters of the sloughs and intermingle with emergent vegetation where conditions are suitable. The marsh grades into a shrub swamp of speckled alder and willows, giving way to an extensive forest of swamp hardwoods dominated by black and green ash. Historically, exposed sand and mudflats near the mouth of Fish Creek were heavily used by waterfowl, gulls, terns, and shorebirds as loafing or feeding sites. Prolonged low water levels in the mid 2000's supported establishment of vegetation, eliminating the mud flat habitat in the area. More recently, high water levels have precluded exposure of new sandbars and mudflats.

- With over 300 acres of wetlands, Fish Creek is the largest freshwater estuary complex in Chequamegon Bay. It provides valuable ecosystem services for water quality and serves as an important spawning and nursery habitat for fish, stopover habitat for migrating birds, and breeding habitat for several rare marsh birds and a rare herptile.
- This area is within the Fish Creek Conservation Opportunity Area (COA), as described in the Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan (WDNR, 2015a). Priority actions for this COA include preserving and maintaining large expanses of wetland communities, both forested and non-forested.
- The Fish Creek Unit is within an Important Bird Area, noted for providing habitat for breeding birds and migratory bird stopover sites (Steele, 2007).

Table 2.48. Fish Creek Habitat Management Area Land Cover

Fish Creek Habitat Management Area		
Habitat Classification	GIS Acres	% Cover
Upland Deciduous Forest	983	52
Forested Wetland	463	25
Open Wetland/Marsh	138	7

Fish Creek Habitat Management Area		
Habitat Classification	GIS Acres	% Cover
Shrub Wetland	101	6
Open Water	79	4
Upland Coniferous Forest	69	4
Upland Grass	25	1
Developed	25	1

Area Management

Apply “Management Objectives and Prescriptions for South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area” (page 75) and area-specific objectives and prescriptions.

Objectives

- Preserve, maintain, and restore the large expanses of wetland communities, both forested and non-forested.
- Maintain, and restore where feasible, the natural hydrology of Fish Creek and its associated estuary.
- Mitigate effects from State Highway 2 and any facilities located on department lands as appropriate, to protect the area’s natural resources.
- Maintain existing areas of Boreal Forest.
- Expand wildlife viewing opportunities as feasible.

Prescriptions

- Complete the existing streambank stabilization project in Pilsen Township (T47N, R06W, S14 [SE1/4 SW1/4]) and evaluate the need for and feasibility of additional streambank stabilization projects; design and implement projects; working with partners, as necessary.
- Evaluate the need for and feasibility of other streambank stabilization projects; design and implement projects; work with partners, as necessary.
- Encourage continued research by and with partners to better understand the hydrology of Fish Creek Estuary.
- Do not develop trails where erosive glacial till is present.
- Construct and maintain a simple, accessible observation platform at the estuary, as needed.
- Inspect, maintain, and replace fishing regulations signage, as necessary.
- Work with partners to retain forested cover and minimize risk of conversion of Ash forests to alder or reed canary grass.

Area 5: Les Voigt State Fish Hatchery Special Management Area

Classification: Special Management Area
 Size: 23 acres
 Unit: Pikes Creek

The Les Voigt State Fish Hatchery is the focal piece of this special management area, which includes hatchery grounds and buildings. The boundary of the management area is the boundary of the hatchery. Adjacent to Lake Superior, the hatchery raises lake trout and other salmonids to stock Lake Superior and many inland lakes and streams throughout Wisconsin.

Hunting and fishing is not permitted on hatchery grounds. A fish refuge extends from the Bayfield hatchery downstream to the outlet ditch confluence with Pike's creek. The fish refuge is closed to fishing from July 15 through October 31.

Table 2.49. Les Voigt State Fish Hatchery Special Management Area Land Cover

Les Voight State Fish Hatchery Special Management Area		
Habitat Classification	GIS Acres	% Cover
Developed	23	100

Area Management

Objective

- Provide and maintain the grounds and facilities for the administration and maintenance support of the fish hatchery according to relevant statutes, administrative policies and directives.

Area 6: Pikes Creek Habitat Management Area

Classification:	Habitat Management Area
Size:	801 acres
Unit:	Pikes Creek

The Pikes Creek Habitat Management Area spans much of the Pikes Creek corridor downstream from Jammer Hill Road and further downstream to Lake Superior. The area also spans the lower two-thirds of North Pikes Creek from Schultz Fire Lane/Valley Road downstream to the confluence with Pikes Creek. This management area helps connect Pikes Creek with its headwater lands that are publicly owned by Bayfield County. It spans most of the coldwater resource of North Pikes Creek.

The uplands boast relatively dense deciduous and coniferous forests, including stands of aspen, various northern and swamp hardwoods, white pine, spruce, and fir. The riparian woody vegetation consists of speckled alder interspersed with herbaceous and other woody species.

Numerous access points exist for hunters, anglers, and others seeking to enjoy the remote trout streams here. The popular moderately-developed (NR 44) Salmo Trail provides access to Lake Superior, with fishing opportunities along the way. Predominant throughout the management area, the aquifer emerges as effluent springs within the stream valleys.

Special Attributes

The Red Dam Fish Refuge extends from the structure commonly known as Red Dam downstream 100 feet. The refuge is posted and prohibits fishing from April 1 through May 31.

Pikes Creek Habitat Management Area is within an Important Bird Area, noted for providing habitat for breeding birds and migratory bird stopover site (Steele, 2007).

Table 2.50. Pikes Creek Habitat Management Area

Pikes Creek Habitat Management Area		
Habitat Classification	GIS Acres	% Cover
Upland Deciduous Forest	454	59
Upland Coniferous Forest	157	20
Forested Wetland	93	12
Developed	25	3
Shrub Wetland	14	2
Open Wetland/Marsh	12	2
Open Water	14	2

Area Management

Apply “Management Objectives and Prescriptions for South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area” (page 75) and area-specific objectives and prescriptions.

Objectives

- Maintain Red Dam Fish Refuge as a protected area for lake-run salmonids during spawning.

Prescriptions

- Inspect fish refuge signage throughout the year, particularly during the fish refuge season; repair and replace signs as necessary.

Area 7: North Pikes Creek Boreal Forest SNA

Classification: Native Community Management Area
 Size: 396 acres
 Unit: Pikes Creek

Given the diversity of exemplary natural communities and uncommon species habitat found here, this management area is proposed for recognition as a State Natural Area. The Boreal Forest and Northern Mesic Forest examples here, along with the associated plant/animal habitats are among the very best in the state.

This relatively narrow stretch of forest along branches of Pikes Creek supports boreal and mesic forest, forested seeps and clay seepage bluffs. The area's terrain is rugged with extremely steep slopes and ravines cutting at angles in many places. Boreal forests are closed canopy and dominated by white pine up to three feet in diameter, along with large white cedar and red pine, while hemlock dominates north-facing slopes. Some large aspen, white spruce, and black ash are also present. Numerous wildflowers indicative of boreal forests can be found in the ground layer. The soil is clay, giving way to sandy silt or sandy clay on the creek terraces. Clay seepage bluffs are scattered throughout and are usually small and sparsely vegetated, but include plants such as balsam poplar, lion's-foot, and golden sedge.

The high conifer cover helps maintain high water quality in Pike Creek by intercepting rainfall, slowing the flow of runoff, and allowing for asynchronous snowmelt and greater groundwater infiltration in the immediate Pike Creek drainage. Due to the extremely steep topography and difficult access to this site, portions of it have likely never been logged. Though narrow, portions of this site have characteristics of an ecological reference area and contains some of the higher quality older-aged boreal and mesic forests on the Superior Coastal Plain. The terrain contributes to the ecological complexity of the site, with all types of aspects and elevations along the slope represented. This leads to an incredible diversity of conifers in a very small area, including mature white pine, red pine, white cedar, white spruce, hemlock, and balsam fir all co-occurring, sometimes within a few acres.

Table 2.51. North Pikes Creek Boreal Forest SNA Land Cover

North Pikes Creek Boreal Forest SNA		
Habitat Classification	GIS Acres	% Cover
Upland Deciduous Forest	205	52
Upland Coniferous Forest	175	44
Open Water	16	4
Upland Grass	1	>1

Area Management

Apply "Management Objectives and Prescriptions for South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area" (page 75) and area-specific objectives and prescriptions.

Objectives

- Protect the Dry-mesic Conifer Forest, Clay Seepage Bluffs, and Forested Seep natural community types.
- Maintain older-age classes of conifer-dominated forest.

Prescriptions

- In general, allow natural processes to determine the ecological characteristics of the management area. Timber stand improvement projects such as prescribed burning, limited tree cutting, girdling and spot treatments of herbicides may be used, when doing so will assist in maintaining or increasing representation of long-lived conifer species. Other practices may include salvage and replanting trees following natural disturbance events such as wildfire or blow down.
- Monitor and control invasive species per department protocol in Common Elements, which may include the use of herbicides.

Area 8: Flag River Habitat Management Area

Classification:	Habitat Management Area
Size:	832 acres
Unit:	Flag River

This area spans most of the Flag River corridor from the Bayfield County Forest boundary downstream to Lake Superior in Port Wing. It establishes connectivity to the headwater lands and aids in fostering holistic land management. Much of the upland landscape is forested, with relatively dense stands of deciduous and coniferous species such as aspen, northern and swamp hardwoods, white pine, spruce, and fir. Riparian vegetation includes speckled alder interspersed among herbaceous species. Topographical relief is significant. A prominent feature of the up-stream parcels is the aquifer, which emerges as effluent springs throughout the stream valleys. The aquifer provides the cold water on which the management area was identified and established. Adjacent to Port Wing and Lake Superior, the topographical relief is minimal and provides habitat for coastal forest and wetland species.

Special Attributes

This management area is within the Coastal Headlands and Estuaries COA, as described in the Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan (WDNR 2015). Priority actions for this COA include increasing the representation of conifer-dominated boreal forest, especially in older age classes.

Table 2.52. Flag River Habitat Management Area Land Cover

Flag River Habitat Management Area		
Habitat Classification	GIS Acres	% Cover
Forested Wetland	360	43
Upland Deciduous Forest	260	31
Upland Grass	64	8
Shrub Wetland	55	7
Upland Coniferous Forest	34	4
Open Water	25	3
Developed	9	1
Upland Shrub	8	1
Farmland	1	>1

Area Management

Apply “Management Objectives and Prescriptions for South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area” (page 75) and area-specific objectives and prescriptions.

Objectives

- Protect and restore natural community types, especially sedge meadow coastal wetland.

Prescriptions

- Monitor and control invasive species, especially in the sedge meadow coastal wetland areas. Techniques may include prescribed burning, mowing/brushing and pesticide treatments.
- Complete the abandoned wastewater lagoon project, in partnership with the Town of Port Wing. Develop and maintain public access to restored sedge meadow coastal wetland.

Area 9: Port Wing Boreal Forest State Natural Area – South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area Unit

Classification: Native Community Management Area

Size: TBD acres

Unit: Flag River

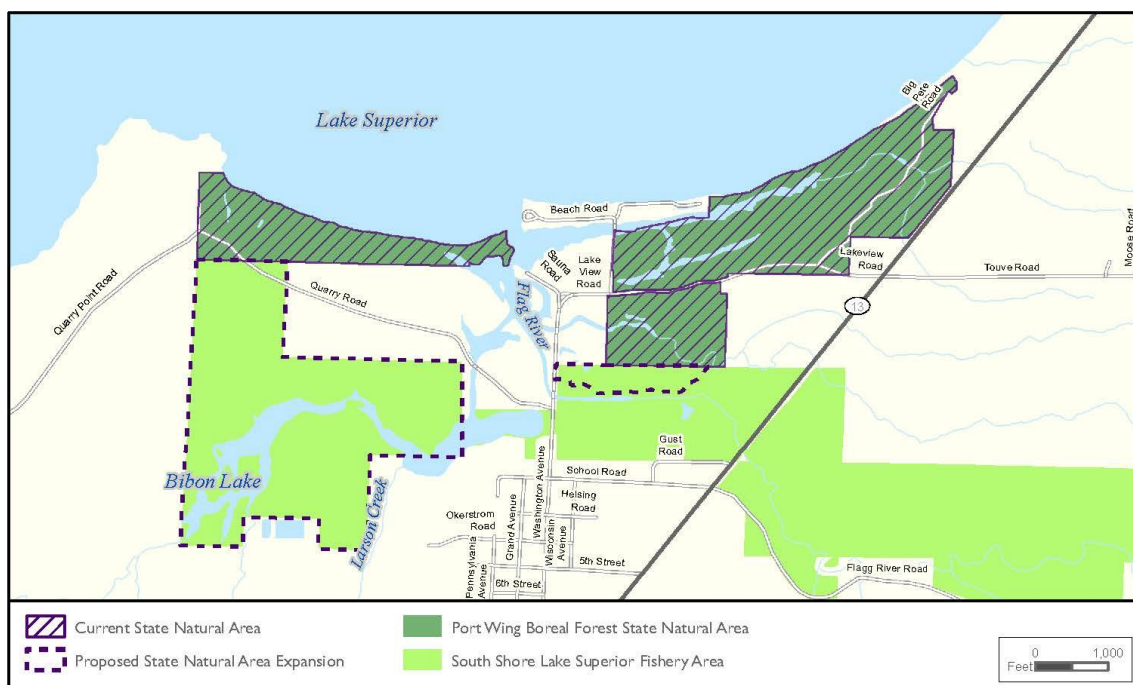
The diversity of exemplary natural communities and uncommon species habitat found on this management warrant recognition as a State Natural Area. The wetland community examples here, along with the associated plant/animal habitats are among the very best in the state.

The Port Wing Boreal Forest State Natural Area is predominantly a standalone state natural area, north of the Flag River Unit. This plan proposes expanding the SNA designation to include this management area of the South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area. Figure 2.1 shows the relationship between the standalone SNA and South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area. For a complete property description, please see the section for the standalone property Port Wing Boreal Forest State Natural Area (page 116).

Table 2.53. Port Wing Boreal Forest SNA– South Shore Lake Superior FA Unit Land Cover

Port Wing Boreal Forest SNA– South Shore Lake Superior FA Unit		
Habitat Classification	GIS Acres	% Cover
Shrub Wetland	136	58
Upland Deciduous Forest	55	23
Open Water	30	13
Open Wetland/Marsh	13	6
Developed	1	>1

Figure 2.1. Port Wing Boreal Forest State Natural Area Expansion



Area Management

Apply “Management Objectives and Prescriptions for South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area” (page 75) and additional management described for the standalone portion of Port Wing Boreal Forest State Natural Area (page 116).

Area 10: Iron River Habitat Management Area

Classification: Habitat Management Area

Size: 987 acres

Unit: Iron River

The Iron River flows north through this management area and empties into Lake Superior less than two miles beyond its boundary. The property hosts a sea lamprey barrier which blocks migration to upstream spawning areas to reduce potential predation on Lake Superior fish, including lake trout.

Riparian zones include steep sand and clay banks typical of the region, with a few ledges in the upper river segments. A remnant flowage exits on the property, created by the Orienta Hydroelectric Project which lasted until 2001. Resch Creek joins the Iron River near the old dam site. Two other small waterways in this area also empty into the Iron River. The upland landscape is covered with relatively dense deciduous and coniferous forests, including stands of aspen, northern and swamp hardwoods, white pine, spruce, and fir. A predominant feature of this management area is the aquifer, which emerges as effluent springs throughout the stream valleys.

Table 2.54. Iron River Habitat Management Area Land Cover

Iron River Habitat Management Area		
Habitat Classification	GIS Acres	% Cover
Upland Deciduous	737	75
Open Wetland/Marsh	119	12
Forested Wetland	64	6
Open Water	34	3
Upland Conifer	25	3
Upland Shrub	7	1
Developed	1	>1

Area Management

Apply “Management Objectives and Prescriptions for South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area” (page 75) and area-specific objectives and prescriptions.

Prescriptions

- Evaluate the feasibility of constructing an ADA-accessible observation deck to overlook Orienta falls, the exposed former lakebed, and existing sea lamprey barrier. Construct observation deck and associated lightly to moderately-developed access trail from parking area if considered feasible.

Area 11: Cranberry River Habitat Management Area (591 acres)

Classification: Habitat Management Area
 Size: 591 acres
 Unit: Cranberry River

Located southwest of Herbster, and less than a half-mile from Lake Superior, this management area consists of the Cranberry River Unit of South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area: seven parcels varying in size from 10 acres to over 100 acres. The project boundary follows sections of the Cranberry River, East Fork Cranberry River and Lenawee Creek. The southern-most parcels are adjacent to Bayfield County Forest, slightly north of the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, on Lenawee Creek. These abutting lands foster connectivity for water and land management throughout Lenawee Creek.

Much of the land within this area has steep topography leading to the waterways. Uplands are forested with dense stands of deciduous and coniferous species including aspen, northern and swamp hardwoods, white pine, spruce, and fir. Riparian vegetation includes speckled alder and herbaceous species. Several easements exist to facilitate stream access. A prominent feature is the aquifer which emerges as effluent springs throughout the stream valleys. The aquifer provides the cold water on which the management area was identified and established.

Special Attributes

The Cranberry River Unit falls within the Coastal Headlands and Estuaries COA, as described in the Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan (WDNR, 2015a). Priority actions for this COA include increasing the representation of conifer-dominated boreal forest, especially in older age classes. The area is also considered an Important Bird Area as it provides habitat for breeding birds and migratory bird stopover sites (Steele, 2007).

Table 2.55. Cranberry River Habitat Management Area Land Cover

Cranberry River Habitat Management Area		
Habitat Classification	GIS Acres	% Cover
Upland Deciduous	248	42
Upland Conifer	155	27
Upland Grass	58	9
Forested Wetland	41	7
Shrub Wetland	40	6
Upland Shrub	27	5
Open Water	13	3
Developed	6	1

Area Management

Apply “Management Objectives and Prescriptions for South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area” (page 75) and area-specific objectives and prescriptions.

ST LOUIS RIVER STREAMBANK PROTECTION AREA

The property features a rugged landscape with steep slopes, deep ravines and extensive wetlands along the St. Louis River, the largest river to flow into Lake Superior from the U.S. This property functions to protect and restore the water quality of the St. Louis and Red rivers from further streambank erosion, siltation and sedimentation; impacts due in part to the highly erodible nature of the red clay soils that typify this region. The property lies within the National Estuarine Research Reserve System, which was established in 2010.



PROPERTY OVERVIEW

The St Louis River Streambank Protection Area (SBPA) is located on the St. Louis River in northwest Douglas County near the cities of Superior, WI and Duluth, MN. The St. Louis River Coastal Estuary is the largest and most diverse

Current State Ownership:	6,863 acres
Fee Title:	6,863 acres
Easement:	0 acres

in the Great Lakes, with extensive marshes and open wetlands (WDNR 2015). The property contains a highly dissected clay topography of steep slopes and ravines filled with wetlands and tributaries to the Red River, the Little Pokegama River, and ultimately the St. Louis River. Seventy percent of the Red River watershed (aptly named for the red clay soils of the region) is within this property. It provides a remarkable combination of high quality natural resources in an area of major industrial and municipal activity. The St. Louis River drains into Lake Superior in proximity to the Superior municipal water system intake.

[Maps](#)

Click the links to access each map type in the online DNR Property Planning Viewer

[DNR & Other Lands](#)

[Recreation](#)

[Roads](#)

[Land Cover](#)

[Land Management Classification](#)

The property provides public access to 18 miles of stream and 8 state-owned islands. The large mainland parcel, commonly referred to as Red River Breaks comprises the majority of the acreage (over 6,000 acres); the Fond du Lac marshes (~360 acres); Clough Island (~350 acres); and a small peninsula (28 acres) comprise the remainder. The property is bounded on the north by the St. Louis River, on the west by the Minnesota-Wisconsin state line and Jay Cooke State Park, on the south by the Wrenshall Grade Recreational Trail and on the east by section line 14 just west of the Village of Oliver, WI. The Fond du Lac hydroelectric dam on the St. Louis River is also immediately west. The property lies between 4,400 acres of Superior Municipal Forest (including Dwight's Point and Pokegama Wetlands SNA) and almost 9,000 acres of Minnesota's Jay Cooke State Park.

Recreation opportunities include fishing (walleye, lake sturgeon, bass, muskellunge, northern pike), hunting (especially waterfowl), trapping, bird watching, nature study and other compatible forms of outdoor recreation. The property is open for day use only; no overnight camping is allowed. Fishing and hunting comprise the heaviest uses; however, several geocaching sites are also located on the property.

In 1994, the St. Louis River SBPA was established with the express purpose of protecting the water quality of the St. Louis and Red rivers from further streambank erosion, siltation and sedimentation; impacts attributable in part to historic logging and use of motorized vehicles. However, past industrial practices within the entire watershed led to the St. Louis River being included on the list of impaired waters under the federal Clean Water Act. It is listed for contaminated sediment (DDT and Dieldrin), contaminated fish tissue (mercury and PCBs), and chronic aquatic



toxicity (PAHs and metals). While the department is participating in a multi-partner restoration effort, most remediation activities are taking place outside the scope of this planning process.

Special Attributes:

The St. Louis River SBPA lies within two Conservation Opportunity Areas (COA) of continental importance (Pokegama-Nemadji Wetlands COA and the St. Louis River Estuaries Aquatic COA), for which Wisconsin has a unique responsibility for protection, as described in the Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan (WDNR, 2015a). The property is also designated a high-quality “Wetland Gem” site by the Wisconsin Wetlands Association (Crouse and O’Connor, 2015). The Red River is classified as an Exceptional Resource Water.

The St. Louis River SBPA is included within the National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERR). NERR is a network of 27 representative biogeographic regions of the United States that are protected for long-term research, water-quality monitoring, education, and coastal stewardship. The property is one of only two NERR sites located within an inland state (NOAA Office for Coastal Management, 2018).

The St. Louis River was designated as an [Area of Concern \(AOC\)](#) by the [US EPA](#) in 1987 as part of an international “[Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement](#)” between the US and Canada. Contamination has been found at several sites along the river, including the Interlake and U.S. Steel Superfund sites, Newton Creek, and Hog Island Inlet (US EPA 2014). The majority of beneficial use impairments (BUIs) listed for the St. Louis River AOC are due to habitat loss from extensive filling of wetlands, dredging shallow aquatic habitat, and releases of waste materials that contaminated the sediments and water in the estuary (US EPA 2014). The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) are responsible for implementing Remedial Action Plans to remove the impairments and delist the St. Louis River as an Area of Concern (WDNR 2015b). Significant progress towards restoring the beneficial uses of the river has been made by AOC stakeholders since 1989, including creation of an independent nonprofit citizen’s advisory committee called the St. Louis River Alliance. Stakeholders set a goal of completing major remediation and restoration management actions by year 2020 with a goal of delisting in 2025 (US EPA 2014).

Of the 14 water quality beneficial uses, the following eight are listed as impaired for the St. Louis River:

- Restrictions on fish and wildlife consumption
- Degradation of fish and wildlife populations
- Fish tumors or other deformities
- Degradation of benthos
- Restrictions on dredging activities
- Excessive loading of nutrients and sediments
- Beach closings and body contact
- Loss of fish and wildlife habitat

Degradation of aesthetics was a previously listed impairment that was removed in August 2014.

PUBLIC USE AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Developed recreation facilities are limited on this property because the management goal is to protect the St. Louis and Red rivers and their tributaries from increased siltation and bank slumping that would result from intensive use

and development. Access is primarily via small watercraft from the St. Louis River or foot travel from County Hwy W along the east side of the mainland property; and by foot travel from the parking lot or from the Wrenshall Grade Recreational Trail that runs parallel and directly south of the property boundary. In winter, as conditions allow, it is also possible to walk to Clough Island over the frozen St. Louis River.

The property is intended for day use only. Recreational opportunities are both terrestrial and aquatic-based, with most users pursuing fishing and hunting, primarily for deer, waterfowl, and ruffed grouse. Other permitted uses include trapping, hiking, wildlife viewing, geocaching, swimming, berry picking, canoeing and kayaking. Firearms are not permitted for hunting on Clough Island; however, bow-hunting is allowed there. Waterfowl hunting out on the water surrounding the island is permitted.

Trails

- A ½-mile primitive trail segment is proposed for the southwest corner of the property to connect the Wisconsin and Minnesota segments of the **North Country National Scenic Trail (NCT)**. It will allow for foot travel to continue from one state to the other on this multi-state hiking trail. The NCT is a project of the National Park Service, with multi-state collaboration. It is also recognized as a state trail in Wisconsin, with a project boundary established and approved in 1980. This trail segment is proposed to be a certified segment, developed and managed in accordance with the National Trails System Act and the comprehensive management plan for the trail. Certification (outside this planning process) entitles the trail to be marked with the official trail emblem and supplemented by other types of markings, such as paint blazes, and signs that provide distance and directional information. The proposed trail is limited to the southwest corner of the property to minimize the number of stream crossings and preserve the overall management area for its primary objective of water quality protection.
- Douglas County maintains the **Wrenshall Grade Recreational Trail** that runs parallel to and directly south of the property boundary. This multi-use trail provides foot access to the property but is not intended to provide motorized access onto the property.

Water Access

Both parcels of the property may be reached via watercraft from the St. Louis River. One unimproved, not maintained, boat landing area is used by canoe and kayakers to access the south side of Clough Island.

A developed boat launch exists at the department-owned “Oliver – St. Louis River State Public Access Site” (name proposed in this planning process), located 0.25 miles upstream from the property.

The St. Louis River Streambank Protection Area is included within the St. Louis River Estuary National Water Trail (Duluth Parks & Recreation, 2017); however, there are no developed facilities on the property for this purpose.

Land Use and Partner Agreements

- The department is responsible for implementing a Remedial Action Plan to delist the St. Louis River as an Area of Concern, as part of the US EPA Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.
- Prior to approval of this plan, a land use agreement with a local mountain bike club and/or the Mont du Lac Resort is anticipated to be complete, for the occasional, minimal boundary crossings that currently exist on the northeast parcel adjacent to Mont du Lac Resort. Confining the bike trail to the existing path will help protect this streambank preservation area for its intended purpose of protecting the streambank and wetland features on this erosion-prone landscape.

Roads and Parking Areas

No DNR roads are maintained year-round for public access. The property has one parking area on the southwest boundary, near the Wrenshall Grade Recreational Trail.

LAND COVER

St Louis River Streambank Protection Area land cover is described in individual management areas. The management areas are geographically distinct (island and mainland portions of the property) and thus describing land cover and anticipated change as such is more descriptive.

MANAGEMENT AREAS, CLASSIFICATIONS AND MANAGEMENT

This property consists of two separate native community management areas, with an overall goal to maximize water quality protection and limit erosion of its highly erodible soil types. Each management area has distinct natural community and habitat characteristics, and each provides different recreational opportunities.

- Area 1: Clough Island
- Area 2: Red River Breaks Boreal Forest, St. Louis River Marshes, & Fond du Lac Peninsula

Area 1: Clough Island Native Community Management Area

Classification: Native Community Management Area
Size: 351 acres

Clough Island is the largest island in the lower St. Louis River and is accessible by boat, or by foot in the winter by crossing the frozen St. Louis River, with the nearest mainland boat launch located near Duluth, MN. A naturally occurring sandy beach exists on the southeast side of the island that enables boat access. Near the beach is a picnic table, an interpretive sign, and the beginnings of some foot paths. Although the island has an extensive history of logging, farming and grazing, significant restoration activities have been contributed by partner groups since 2010, when the department acquired this parcel (Crouse and O'Connor 2015). The property includes a deed restriction for management to protect coastal wetland resources and has similar management restrictions from the Stewardship Grant program.

Table 2.56 lists the habitat classifications (land cover) and the approximate acreage of current and projected cover for Area 2 (see Land Management Classification Map).

Table 2.56. Clough Island Native Community Management Area Land Cover

Habitat Classification	GIS Acres	% Cover	Projected % Cover
Open Wetland/Marsh	116	33	7
Upland Deciduous Forest	106	30	30
Upland Conifer Forest	53	15	15
Shrub Wetland	43	12	26
Forested Wetland	30	9	21
Upland Shrub	3	1	1

Clay cliffs surround much of the island and rise 20-30 feet to a broad, level, red clay plain. The northern half of the island is more forested, including aspen, small blocks of high-quality Boreal and Northern Mesic Forest and emergent marsh. A small but notable Forested Seep originates in the northwestern portion of the island. Dominated by black ash and a diverse ground layer of ferns, sedges and forbs, the seep feeds a small stream flowing north through a large ravine, into a sedge meadow and into the St. Louis River. Forest and wetland habitats are in various stages of restoration (Crouse and O'Connor 2015). Over the next 50 years, habitat land cover is projected to shift slightly toward upland conifer forest, due to recent conifer underplanting.

The southern half of the island is more open landscape with approximately 100 ac of wet grasslands, sedge meadows, and shrublands that have generally recovered from past farming and grazing. Blue-joint grass is common along with cool-season grasses (Kentucky bluegrass and timothy). Wetter areas contain native grasses and sedges of wet meadows. Shrub thickets are interspersed, becoming dense in places. Invasive shrubs (honeysuckle; common buckthorn) are locally dense (Crouse and O'Connor 2015). Over the next 50 years, forested wetlands and shrub-dominated wetlands are projected to increase, as some shrub wetlands naturally succeed to forest and other open wetlands succeed to shrubs.

Area Management

Objectives

- Protect the steep clay cliffs that surround the island to minimize their erosion.
- Continue restoration of the island over time to a natural appearing condition with emphasis on restoring the integrity of its natural community types.
- Provide opportunities for wildlife watching, nature study, hiking, bow-hunting, fishing and other compatible recreation.

Prescriptions

- Largely passively manage the island habitat (especially Boreal Forest, Forested Swamps, Marshes, and Northern Dry-Mesic Forest), except for control of invasive species. As resources allow, enhance or protect habitat to restore and maintain native vegetation that will limit erosion and slow runoff by doing such things as: routing trails away from sensitive sites and selectively replanting native vegetation. Restore to a natural appearance all sites or areas that were previously developed or otherwise modified by human disturbance. Restore human-caused eroded areas to a natural appearing condition.
- If demand exists, develop and maintain limited primitive hiking trails, avoiding cliffs and sites with fragile or rare vegetation.
- Place an informal kiosk at the primitive boat landing area. It should include a property map, a list of what activities are lawful on the property, and appropriate fishery-related information.
- Monitor and discourage unauthorized snowmobile use.

Common Elements

Apply Common Elements for General Property Management Practices.

Guidance for use of Common Elements can be found on page 13. If management described in this plan conflicts with Common Elements, apply the management described in this document.

Area 2: Red River Breaks Boreal Forest, St. Louis River Marshes & Fond du Lac Peninsula Native Community Management Area

Classification: Native Community Management Area

Size: 6,120 acres

It is worth restating that in 1994 this property was acquired for the express purpose of protecting the water quality of the St. Louis River and Red River, including its extensive area of tributaries from further streambank erosion, siltation and sedimentation; adverse effects that are attributable in part to impacts from historic logging and use of motorized vehicles on highly erodible soils.

This large mainland parcel with its adjacent marshes and small islands is managed and classified as one large native community management area; however, there are three distinct sites worth noting on this parcel (WDNR 2014; Crouse and O'Connor 2015). While details are provided in Chapter Three of this plan, the summaries in this section are important for understanding the management area objectives and prescriptions:

1. Red River Breaks and Forested Swamp
2. St. Louis River Marshes
3. Fond du Lac peninsula (northwest portion of the property, adjacent to Fond du Lac Dam)

Red River Breaks Boreal Forest and Forested Swamp

This site includes the Red River and associated tributaries that run into the lower St. Louis River. It consists of deeply-incised and heavily eroded ravines of red clay soils and an extensive block of undeveloped and roadless forest. The dominant cover type is Boreal Forest; a mix of trembling aspen, white birch, white pine, and white spruce. The latter three, along with northern white-cedar, are characteristic of the northern Wisconsin "white forest", a unique type of Boreal Forest found near Lake Superior. Conifers (formerly dominant) presently occur as scattered individuals or in small stands, with white spruce, white pine, and balsam fir the most important species. The lower slopes of the steep-sided ravines are often filled with springs, sometimes supporting remnant stands of northern white cedar and unusual herbs. Small but mature stands of large white spruce, black ash, and balsam poplar occur on small terraces above the streams in the ravine bottoms.

Small areas of natural community Clay Seepage Bluffs occur in the upper portions of the ravines where groundwater seepage and steep slopes combine to form relative open, moist clay slopes. In poorly drained "flats" on the level ridges between ravines, there are patches of black ash-dominated hardwood swamp and thickets of speckled alder and other tall wetland shrubs. A large black ash dominated swamp also occurs along the St. Louis River. Areas of standing water are infrequent; however, they support small emergent marshes and broad-leaved sedge meadows. Patches of well-drained mesic hardwood forest occur on the ridges, with sugar maple and yellow birch. In general, the "northern hardwoods" community is rare on the site. Several bird Species of Greatest Conservation Need and rare plants exist here.

St. Louis River Marshes

Extensive emergent and submergent marshes exist in the upper portions of the St. Louis River Estuary from Fond du Lac, MN downstream to Oliver, WI. They are located inside the main channel's meanders, and in protected, shallow bays along the upland shores of this property. Arrowheads, bulrushes, bur-reed, lake sedge, and cattail are among the important emergent aquatics. Wild rice and sweet flag are locally common. Deeper waters of the marsh complexes support submergent and floating-leaved macrophytes such as coontail, waterweed, yellow water lily, wild celery, and pondweeds. Patches of marsh associated with the main channel are often bordered by a natural

levee adjoining the river. Where well-developed, these natural levees are vegetated with tall wetland shrubs and lowland hardwoods, especially speckled alder, red-osier dogwood, meadowsweet, willows, ashes, and box elder.

The Fond du Lac Marshes protect water quality and flow, central to maintaining one of the largest freshwater estuaries on the western Great Lakes. These extensive wetlands are important nesting and foraging habitat for migrant and breeding birds and provide critical spawning habitat for fish and breeding areas for amphibians. A significant population of a rare plant is also found in the marshes.

Fond du Lac Peninsula

In the extreme northwest portion of this management area is a peninsula with a sandstone bedrock core and clay ridge that lies immediately east of the Fond du Lac Dam, constructed in 1907. The peninsula has steep, tall slopes (~150 ft high) rising abruptly from the river on the west side, partially forested with white pine, red pine, northern white-cedar, white spruce, and paper birch with bare, eroded areas and exposed clay and sandstone. The groundlayer is sparsely vegetated. The narrow ridge top and eastern slopes are forested with red oak, white and red pine, white spruce, and paper birch, with small areas of sugar maple. The northern end of the peninsula shoreline is rocky with areas of exposed sandstone present, including in an old quarry.

Northern Dry-mesic Forest is the primary forest type on the peninsula with lesser areas of Floodplain Forest and Boreal Forest (on steep slopes). The Northern Dry-mesic Forest canopy is dominated by white spruce, red and white pine and red oak with northern white-cedar, white birch, green and black ash, balsam poplar, and sugar maple as canopy associates. The shrub layer includes speckled alder, alternate-leaved dogwood, beaked hazelnut, black currant, thimbleberry, and red raspberry. The ground layer is dominated by false melic grass, ostrich fern, sensitive fern, wood anemone, Canada mayflower, and starflower.

Unusual features include steep rocky slopes, exposed clay bluffs, sandstone cliffs, river terraces and a former river channel. It is adjacent to Jay Cooke State Park in Minnesota and is a small part of a relatively large block of mature forest in the region. Uncommon plants (American stickseed and purple clematis) occur here with the potential for other rare species to be found.

This region experienced major flooding in 2012, which caused significant erosion along property river banks and within the river channel. Some locations are recovering naturally, whereas others may require restoration efforts such as reforestation or re-vegetation to better protect them from further erosion, including around the old quarry.

Table 2.57 lists the habitat classifications (land cover) and the approximate acreage of current and projected cover for Area 2 (Land Management Classification Map).

Table 2.57. Red River Breaks, St. Louis River Marshes and Fond du Lac Peninsula Native Community Management Area Land Cover

Habitat Classification	GIS Acres	% Cover	Projected % Cover
Upland Deciduous Forest	5012	77	77
Upland Conifer Forest	670	10	10
Forested Wetland	441	7	3
Shrub Wetland	287	4	8
Open Wetland/Marsh	48	1	1
Developed (ROW)	13	<1	<1

Noteworthy for its remote, wilderness character, there are large blocks of rough, deeply dissected, red clay terrain drained by the Red River, largely dominated by early-successional aspen and, to a lesser degree, paper birch and conifers (Crouse & O'Connor, 2015). Upland habitat is projected to stay relatively similar in the absence of management. Conifers once comprised over 60% of the forest cover (Public Land Survey, 1853-1865). Currently, mature conifers are restricted to narrow, deep ravines, and comprise a relatively small portion of the total forested landscape; species include white pine, white spruce, and balsam fir. These conifers are an important component in the understory of aspen-dominated forests across this landscape and help to reduce erosion and stream sedimentation by slowing spring snow melt (Jereczek, Wagner, Larson, & Ledder, 2011). Potential conifer restoration through underplanting would lead to a proportional shift toward upland conifer forest. Swamp hardwoods dominate lower-elevation flats. Alder thickets with small openings of sedge meadows are common in the high-elevation clay flats with high water table. Over the next 50 years, there may be some conversion of forested wetland to shrub or open wetland, as ash succumbs to emerald ash borer; underplanting of native hardwoods or wetland conifers could reduce this risk.

Area Management

Objectives

- Protect the wetland hydrology and hydrogeology in this area of the Red River and its tributaries which flow into the St. Louis River. Prevent erosion and protect water quality to the best capability of the property.
- Maintain or restore the representative natural community types, including Boreal Forest, Hardwood Swamp, Northern Dry-mesic Forest, Emergent and submergent marshes.
- Provide conditions where users may feel they are in a secluded, natural setting. Maintain the area in an undeveloped, natural condition to maintain its remote, wild setting with no motorized access.
- Allow opportunity for compatible, low impact recreation such as hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, and nature observation.

Prescriptions

- Largely passively manage both forested and unforested natural community types (Boreal Forest, Hardwood Swamp, Marshes, and Northern Dry-Mesic Forest), except for control of invasive species. As resources allow, enhance or protect habitat to restore and maintain native vegetation to limit erosion and slow runoff by doing such things as: selectively replanting native vegetation and encouraging Boreal Forest restoration.
- Consider implementing alternative management strategies outlined in the department's Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) forestry management guidelines to encourage forest health and diversity, and to protect wetland water quality.
- Work with partners and neighboring landowners to implement practices that improve habitat and water quality and move towards wholistic watershed management.

Common Elements

Apply Common Elements for General Property Management Practices.

Guidance for use of Common Elements can be found on page 13. If management described in this plan conflicts with Common Elements, apply the management described in this document.

- Partner with the North Country National Scenic Trail Association (NCTA) to establish a primitive trail segment about ½-mile in length across the southwest corner of this parcel, to connect existing segments of the NCT between Wisconsin and Minnesota. Trail layout should minimize the number of stream crossings and impacts to the overall watershed.
- Monitor and discourage unauthorized ATV and snowmobile use.
- Increase signage at property access points to inform users of approved and prohibited uses.
- Support a land use agreement with Mont du Lac Resort to permit their continued use of mountain bike trails that possibly encroach on department property and pre-date department acquisition. Trails should continue to be maintained to prevent erosion and protect water quality. No further expansion of trails onto department property shall be permitted.
- Expand the parking area at County Hwy 'W' as needed to hold up to 10 vehicles.
- Coordinate with the NCTA for trail certification and maintenance of the trail segment.

BARK BAY SLOUGH STATE NATURAL AREA

Bark Bay Slough State Natural Area hosts coastal wetlands and beach areas, which serve as important habitat to many species of the Superior Coastal Plain. The site's role as a reserve and ecological reference area for shore fen, tamarack swamp and submergent/emergent marsh provides opportunities for education and research into the Superior Coastal Plain's natural state. The diversity of exemplary natural communities and rare species found at this site warrant continued recognition as a State Natural Area. The Shore Fen, Great Lakes Beach and their associated plant/animal habitats are among the very best in the state.



PROPERTY OVERVIEW

Bark Bay Slough State Natural Area, a 646-acre property located between two rocky headlands along Lake Superior in Bayfield County, was designated in 1977. A large lagoon occupies the center of the site and supports submergent and floating-leaved aquatic plants. Together, the wetlands and 28-acre lagoon form a bay-mouth bar lake. This shallow (eight-feet deep), hardwater lake supports mostly panfish and northern pike. The Bark River and a spring complex supply water to the lake and wetlands. Noteworthy birds include bald eagle, sandhill crane, Brewer's blackbird, and American bittern. Substantial numbers of migrating shorebirds also use this property.

Current State Ownership:	638 acres
Fee Title:	638 acres
Easement:	0 acres

[Maps](#)

Click the links to access each map type in the online DNR Property Planning Viewer

[DNR & Other Lands](#)

[Recreation](#)

[Roads](#)

[Land Cover](#)

[Land Management Classification](#)

Special Attributes

Bark Bay Slough State Natural Area falls within the Coastal Headwaters and Estuaries Conservation Opportunity Area; which is of global significance due to its exceptional quality habitat for uncommon species of plants and animals (WDNR, 2015a). The Bark River and Bark Bay Slough are classified as an Outstanding Resource Waters.

PUBLIC USE AND RECREATION FACILITIES

The property is open to hiking, fishing, hunting, trapping, cross-country skiing, wildlife viewing and canoeing and kayaking. A developed boat launch is the sole facility on the property.

[Roads and Parking Lots](#)

Bark Bay Road is town-owned and bisects the property, crossing it for approximately one mile. A parking area is available near the developed boat launch.

[Water Access](#)

The property hosts one developed boat launch, which gives access to Bark Bay Slough.



LAND COVER

Table 2.58 lists the habitat classifications (land cover) for Bark Bay Slough State Natural Area. Habitat includes a lagoon off from a coastal barrier spit, springs, and extensive wetlands, including coastal fen and coastal bog. A forested interior sand spit breaks the wetlands into two major sections. A sandy, two-mile long barrier spit contains red pine and white pine with an understory of blueberry, bearberry, alder, sweet gale, and beach grasses. A large lagoon occupies the center of the site and supports submergent and floating-leaved aquatic plants. The wetlands and 28-acre lagoon form a bay-mouth bar, shallow lake.

Table 2.58. Bark Bay Slough State Natural Area Land Cover

Bark Bay Slough State Natural Area			
Habitat Classification	GIS Acres	% Cover	Representative WisFIRS Cover Types
Great Lakes Coastal	440	68	Great Lakes Beach, Great Lakes Interdunal Wetland
Open Water	85	13	Minor Lake
Upland Deciduous	76	12	Northern Hardwoods

Forest Certification

For the purposes of forest certification, Bark Bay Slough State Natural Area is considered a high conservation value forest.

MANAGEMENT AREAS, CLASSIFICATIONS AND MANAGEMENT

Bark Bay Slough State Natural Area consists of one management area, classified as a native community management area.

Property Management

Objectives

- Manage upland stands towards a mixed forest of long-lived species such as white pine, red pine, white cedar and white spruce. Provide older age classes.
- Allow natural processes to determine the ecological characteristics of the wetland communities.
- Provide access for motorized and nonmotorized watercraft by providing one developed boat access point.
- Support the management objectives presented in the Lake Superior Fisheries Management Plan and the Lake Superior Lakewide Area Management Plan (LAMP).

Prescriptions

- In the uplands use limited active management, including commercial timber harvest and underplanting to convert aspen-dominated stands to longer-lived tree species with a long-term goal of providing older forest

Common Elements

Apply Common Elements for General Property Management Practices and Recreation Facilities and their Management.

Guidance for use of Common Elements can be found on page 13. If management described in this plan conflicts with Common Elements, apply the management described in this document.

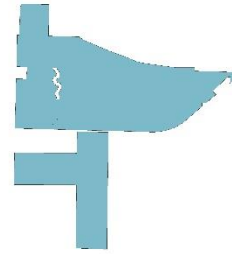


characteristics. Use non-commercial, timber stand improvement techniques such as hand girdling to promote desirable tree species such as white pine, red pine and oak.

- Do not conduct timber management in wetlands except to control invasive species.
- Coordinate with the Town of Clover to maintain the parking area and public boat access on Bark Bay Road. Develop no additional recreational features.

LOST CREEK BOG STATE NATURAL AREA

Lost Creek Bog State Natural Area provides research and educational opportunities while protecting submergent/emergent marsh, open bog and shore fen habitat types; all important to the Superior Coastal Plain. The site also facilitates the popular activities of canoeing and kayaking the Lake Superior shoreline. The diversity of exemplary natural communities and rare species found at this site warrant continued recognition as a State Natural Area. The Shore Fen, Submergent/Emergent Marsh and their associated plant/animal habitats are among the very best in the state.



PROPERTY OVERVIEW

Lost Creek Bog State Natural Area is located along the northern shore of Bayfield County. Designated in 1993, the property features a Lake Superior estuary at the mouths of three small creeks where they empty into

Siskiwit Bay. Lost Creek 1 and 2 are flat, shallow, coldwater streams with sandy bottoms and sustain a small brook trout population. Lost Creek 3 is a warm water drainage stream supporting minnow species. At their confluence, an emergent marsh harbors the largest known Wisconsin population of a state-endangered plant. Migratory waterfowl and other water birds make extensive use the property.

Current State Ownership:	863 acres
Fee Title:	860 acres
Easement:	3 acres

[Maps](#)

Click the links to access each map type in the online DNR Property Planning Viewer

[DNR & Other Lands](#)

[Recreation](#)

[Roads](#)

[Land Cover](#)

[Land Management Classification](#)

The management goal is to manage the site as a reserve for submergent/emergent marsh, open bog, and shore fen, as an aquatic reserve and a wetland protection site, as a rare plant habitat site, and as an ecological reference area. Opportunities exist for research and education on the high-quality native northern mesic forests, tamarack swamps and open bogs.

Special Attributes

Lost Creek Bog State Natural Area falls within the Coastal Headwaters and Estuaries Conservation Opportunity Area; which is of global significance due to its exceptional quality habitat for uncommon species of plants and animals (WDNR, 2015a).

PUBLIC USE AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Lost Creek Bog SNA is open to the public for hiking, fishing, cross-country skiing, hunting, trapping, and canoeing/kayaking.

Roads and Parking Lots

Nearly five miles of public, non-DNR roads give access to Lost Creek Bog State Natural Area. A parking area is present near the carry-in boat launch. A developed boat launch, offering access to Lake Superior, is present approximately 0.4 miles from the property in the Town of Bell.



Water Access

One carry-in boat launch exists on the property, at the end of Blueberry Lane. The launch offers access to Lost Creek Slough and Lake Superior.

LAND COVER

Table 2.59 lists the habitat classifications (land cover) for this property. Habitat includes a coastal barrier sand spit, forested with spruce and pine, that separates the wetlands from Lake Superior. Natural communities include a shore fen, grading to open sedge bog, shrub swamp, and tamaracks of northern wet forest. The fen is well developed on the west and north sides of the lagoon, with a mat composed of woolly sedge, bogbean, sweet gale, and cotton grass. Boggy areas are dominated by sphagnum mosses, sedges, leather-leaf and other ericaceous shrubs. Flora of the marsh consists of lake sedge, water arum, marsh cinquefoil, and cattail. Bur-reed, water milfoil, yellow water-lily, common bladderwort, and pondweeds are among the submergent and floating-leaved species. Rare plants and animals and uncommon nesting birds have been recorded here.

Table 2.59. Lost Creek Bog State Natural Area Land Cover

Lost Creek Bog State Natural Area			
Habitat Classification	GIS Acres	% Cover	Representative WisFIRS Cover Types
Shrub Wetland	408	48	Lowland Shrub
Open Wetland/Marsh	203	24	Marsh
Upland Deciduous	123	14	Northern Hardwoods, Aspen
Forested Wetland	55	6	Black Spruce, Tamarack, White Cedar, Swamp Hardwoods
Upland Conifer	49	6	Red Pine
Open Water	15	2	

Forest Certification

For the purposes of forest certification, Lost Creek Bog State Natural Area is considered a high conservation value forest.

Common Elements

Apply Common Elements for General Property Management Practices and Recreation Facilities and their Management.

Guidance for use of Common Elements can be found on page 13. If management described in this plan conflicts with Common Elements, apply the management described in this document.

MANAGEMENT AREAS, CLASSIFICATIONS

Lost Creek Bog State Natural Area is composed of one native community management area.

Property Management

Objectives

- Manage towards a mixed forest of long-lived species such as white pine, red pine, white cedar and white spruce while reducing aspen dominance. Provide older age classes.
- Allow natural processes to determine the ecological characteristics of the wetland communities.



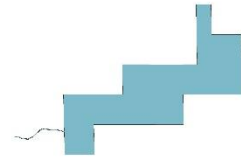
- Provide an unimproved carry-in boat access point at the end of Blueberry Lane.
- Maintain consistency with the fisheries management objectives described in the Lake Superior Fisheries Management Plan and the Lake Superior Lakewide Area Management Plan (LAMP).

Prescriptions

- In the uplands, use limited active management, including commercial timber harvest and underplanting to convert aspen-dominated stands to longer-lived tree species with a long-term goal of providing older forest characteristics. Use non-commercial, timber stand improvement techniques such as hand girdling to promote desirable tree species such as white pine, red pine and oak.
- Periodically thin the red pine plantation with a goal of gradually converting this stand to a mixed forest of boreal species, including white pine, red pine, white spruce and balsam fir.
- Conduct no timber management in wetlands except to control invasive species.
- Maintain a two-vehicle parking area for carry-in boat access at the end of Blueberry Lane. Develop no additional recreational features.

NOURSE SUGARBUSH STATE NATURAL AREA

The northern hardwood forests of the Superior Coastal Plain are showcased at Nourse Sugarbush State Natural Area. A long history of sugaring on the property gives a historical context of the region to accompany the ecological conditions of an old-growth forest. The diversity of exemplary natural communities and rare species found at this site warrant continued recognition as a State Natural Area. The Northern Mesic Forest and its associated plant/animal habitats are among the very best in the state.



PROPERTY OVERVIEW

Nourse Sugarbush State Natural Area was designated in 2006 on the northwest flank of Mt. Ashwabay, a steep-sided hill near Lake Superior in Bayfield County. In the shadow of Mt. Ashwabay, hemlock and sugar maple dominate the canopy, some towering 100-feet high. The site has a long history of maple sugaring. For hundreds of years the Ojibwe tapped the large trees for maple syrup production; diagonal slash marks from early sap collecting are still visible on some trees.

Current State Ownership:	483 acres
Fee Title:	481 acres
Easement:	2 acres

[Maps](#)

Click the links to access each map type in the online DNR Property Planning Viewer

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[Roads](#)

[Land Cover](#)

[Land Management Classification](#)

Nourse Sugarbush SNA was purchased by the Mt. Ashwabay Outdoor Education Foundation with assistance from the Bayfield Regional Conservancy and later donated to the State of Wisconsin. The goal for the property is to manage the site as an old-growth Northern Mesic Forest reserve and an ecological reference area. The property is also managed to provide opportunities for research and education.

PUBLIC USE AND RECREATION FACILITIES

The site is open to the public for hiking, hunting, trapping, cross-country skiing, scientific research, outdoor education, and wildlife viewing.

Trails

As part of the deed transfer to the department, the cross-country ski network existing on the property prior to DNR ownership is allowed to continue. The trail system continues onto adjacent lands, including private ownership and Bayfield County Forest. Approximately 3.2 miles of cross-country ski trails cross Nourse Sugarbush State Natural Area. Trails are maintained by the local cross-country ski group.

Roads and Parking Lots

1.9 miles of a primitive road (known as Sugarbush Road) crosses the property. This road is closed for public vehicles but is open for hiking and cross-country skiing,

Land Use and Partner Agreements

A 0.45-mile pedestrian access easement provides access from Ski Hill Road to the property. The easement crosses land owned by Ashwabay Outdoor Education Foundation, Inc.



LAND COVER

On the north side, habitat includes an old-growth northern mesic forest. The understory is composed of ironwood, sugar maple, and balsam fir. Groundcover includes native species such as wild sarsaparilla, hairy sweet cicely, doll's-eyes, rosy twisted-stalk, intermediate wood fern, partridgeberry, and violets. Table 2.60 lists the habitat classifications (land cover) for the property. Land cover is not anticipated to change.

Table 2.60. Nourse Sugarbush State Natural Area Land Cover

Nourse Sugarbush State Natural Area			
Habitat Classification	GIS Acres	% Cover	Representative WisFIRS Cover Types
Upland Deciduous	432	99%	Oak, Aspen, Northern Hardwoods
Upland Conifer	5	1%	Red Pine

Forest Certification

For the purposes of forest certification, Nourse Sugarbush State Natural Area is considered a high conservation value forest.

MANAGEMENT AREAS, CLASSIFICATIONS AND MANAGEMENT

Nourse Sugarbush State Natural Area is composed of one management area, classified as a native community management area.

Property Management

Objectives

- Manage towards a mixed forest of long-lived species such as hemlock, white pine, sugar maple and yellow birch while reducing aspen dominance. Provide older age classes.
- Allow natural processes to determine the ecological characteristics of the Northern Hardwoods and Hemlock-Hardwoods natural communities.

Prescriptions

- Conduct no timber management in Northern Hardwoods and Hemlock-Hardwoods stands, although invasive species may be controlled.
- Use old forest extended rotation silvicultural techniques in oak stands, with the goal of reducing aspen while increasing white pine, hemlock and oak. Manage these stands towards older forest characteristics.
- Use limited active management, including commercial timber harvest and underplanting to convert aspen-dominated stands to longer-lived tree species with a long-term goal of providing older forest characteristics. Use non-commercial, timber stand improvement techniques such as hand girdling to promote desirable tree species such as white pine, red pine and oak.

Common Elements

Apply Common Elements for General Property Management Practices and Recreation Facilities and their Management.

Guidance for use of Common Elements can be found on page 13. If management described in this plan conflicts with Common Elements, apply the management described in this document.

- Periodically thin the red pine plantation with a goal of gradually converting this stand to a mixed forest of long-lived species.
- Allow existing cross-country ski trail network and use to continue. Do not develop any additional recreational facilities in the management area.

POKEGAMA CARNEGIE WETLANDS STATE NATURAL AREA

Pokegama Carnegie Wetlands showcases spectacular wetlands that play host to a variety of species important to the Superior Coastal Plain. The site gives the public an area to see several rare plants and the boreal forest to open marsh transition that was once common place in the region. The diversity of exemplary natural communities and rare species found at this site warrant continued recognition as a State Natural Area. The Tamarack (poor) Swamp, Alder Thicket and Northern Sedge Meadow and its associated plant/animal habitats are among the very best in the state.



PROPERTY OVERVIEW

Situated on level clay flats between the Pokegama and Little Pokegama Rivers, Pokegama Carnegie Wetlands features an extensive mosaic of wetland vegetation containing many rare plant species. The numerous populations of rare plants occurring within these wetlands are of special significance at this site. The site falls within the continentally significant Pokegama-Nemadji Wetlands Conservation Opportunity Area (WDNR, 2015a).

Current State Ownership:	296 acres
Fee Title:	296 acres
Easement:	0 acres

[Maps](#)

Click the links to access each map type in the online DNR Property Planning Viewer

[DNR & Other Lands](#)

[Recreation](#)

[Roads](#)

[Land Cover](#)

[Land Management Classification](#)

The site is managed as a reserve for tamarack (poor) swamp, alder thicket, and northern sedge meadow. It also serves as a wetland and boreal forest restoration site, aquatic reserve, and as a rare plant habitat site. Former forested wetland areas that were historically logged are being converted back to boreal forest through brushing and native tree planting. Other allowable activities across the entire site include control of invasive plants and animals, maintenance of existing facilities, and access to suppress fires.

PUBLIC USE AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Recreational activities allowed on the department-owned portion of the property include hiking, cross-country skiing, hunting, and trapping.

Roads and Parking Lots

Pokegama Road borders the property and allows access. One primitive 0.75-mile road, closed to public access, is present on the property.

LAND COVER

A tall complex of shrub wetlands composed of speckled alder and willows covers portions of the site, with small patches of open sedge meadow dominated by coarse-leaved sedges and bluejoint grass also present. Small islands of trees dot the wetland with tamarack, white pine, white spruce, trembling aspen, and balsam poplar. A significant effort to convert aspen and alder stands to boreal forest and conifer swamp was initiated in 2008.

Table 2.61 lists the land cover for this property. Land cover is not anticipated to change.



Table 2.61. Pokegama Carnegie Wetlands State Natural Area

Pokegama-Carnegie Wetlands State Natural Area			
Habitat Classification	GIS Acres	% Cover	Representative WisFIRS Cover Types
Shrub Wetland	250	81%	Alder
Upland Deciduous	25	8%	Aspen
Upland Grass	23	7%	Remnant Sand Prairie
Developed	12	4%	Right of Way

Forest Certification

For the purposes of forest certification, Pokegama Carnegie State Natural Area is considered a high conservation value forest.

MANAGEMENT AREAS AND CLASSIFICATIONS

The department-owned and managed portion of Pokegama-Carnegie Wetlands State Natural Area consists of one management area, classified as a native community management area.

Property Management

Objectives

- Restore boreal forest and conifer swamp complex. Over time, create old forest conditions within the restored sites of the property.
- Manage the site as a reserve for tamarack (poor) swamp, alder thicket, and northern sedge meadow, as an aquatic reserve, and as a rare plant habitat site.

Prescriptions

- Active management shall be restricted to non-commercial timber stand improvement projects and invasive species control.
- Maintain barriers to restrict unauthorized motorized access of the property.
- Develop no recreational features.

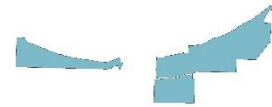
Common Elements

Apply Common Elements for General Property Management Practices and Recreation Facilities and their Management.

Guidance for use of Common Elements can be found on page 13. If management described in this plan conflicts with Common Elements, apply the management described in this document.

PORT WING BOREAL FOREST STATE NATURAL AREA

Port Wing Boreal Forest State Natural Area's place on the Lake Superior shoreline gives kayakers who launch from the property an iconic Superior Coastal Plain view of sand beaches, sandstone cliffs, and boreal forest conifers. The wetlands and forests of the site offer habitat to wildlife and provide opportunities for education and research along with their scenic appeal. The diversity of exemplary natural communities and rare species found at this site warrant continued recognition as a State Natural Area. The Boreal Forest, Great Lakes Dune, several wetland communities and their associated plant/animal habitats are among the very best in the state.



PROPERTY OVERVIEW

Port Wing Boreal Forest State Natural Area lies along the Lake Superior shoreline in Bayfield County. It was designated in 1979 and consists of two parcels of northern dry-mesic forest with distinct boreal characteristics, on inland sand spits. A 20-acre beach and dune complex, with remarkably intact native vegetation, is used extensively by shorebirds and waterfowl. Wildfires and severe wind events affected the structure and composition of the forested uplands during 2015-2016. Numerous large-diameter white and red pine trees were either scorched, snapped off or completely blown over. Most of the affected areas were salvaged and replanted to native conifers.

Current State Ownership:	269 acres
Fee Title:	269 acres
Easement:	0 acres

[Maps](#)

Click the links to access each map type in the online DNR Property Planning Viewer

[DNR & Other Lands](#)

[Recreation](#)

[Roads](#)

[Land Cover](#)

[Land Management Classification](#)

Several local town roads cross the property. It is open for hiking, fishing, hunting, trapping, cross-country skiing, scientific research, and wildlife viewing. Additionally, many people use the beach as a launching point for their canoes and kayaks into Lake Superior. The goals for the site are to manage for old-growth Boreal Forest, Northern Dry-mesic Forest, Open Bog, and Great Lakes Dunes/Beach. The site is also managed as a wetland protection site, aquatic preserve, and ecological reference area.

As part of this plan, the state natural area designation has expanded to a portion of the South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area. This area is detailed in the South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area plan as a management area called the Port Wing Boreal Forest State Natural Area.

RECREATION CONDITIONS AND FACILITIES

Roads and Parking Lots

Approximately 1.25 miles of public, non-DNR roads are adjacent to or bisect the property. One parking area is available for visitors.

Water Access

Many visitors to the property access Lake Superior by carrying canoes or kayaks from the parking area to the beach to launch. A developed boat launch is present on Beach Road less than one-tenth of a mile from the property.



LAND COVER

Habitat consists of two parcels of northern dry-mesic forest with distinct boreal characteristics, on inland sand spits. Large white and red pines form a canopy over white spruce, balsam fir, red maple, white birch, mountain maple, yellow birch, and white cedar. Ground cover includes native species such as blueberries, twinflower, yellow blue-bead-lily, large-leaved aster, three-leaved gold-thread, and club-mosses. Resident forest birds include veery, solitary vireo, northern parula, blackburnian warbler, redstart, purple finch, and white-throated sparrow. Between the forested sand spit and the beach to the north is a wetland complex of northern sedge meadow, shrub swamp and bog containing typical bog species such as pitcher plant, sundews, bladderworts, and sedges. Alder thickets surround the bog. The wetlands are an extension of the estuary of the Flag River, which flows between the two property units. A 20-acre beach and dune complex, with remarkably intact native vegetation, is used extensively by shorebirds and waterfowl.

Table 2.62 lists the habitat classifications (land cover) for this property. Land cover is not anticipated to change.

Table 2.62. Port Wing Boreal Forest State Natural Area Land Cover

Port Wing Boreal Forest State Natural Area			
Habitat Classification	GIS Acres	% Cover	Representative WisFIRS Cover Types
Great Lakes Coastal	196	93%	Great Lakes Beach, Great Lakes Interdunal Wetland
Open Water	11	5%	
Developed	5	2%	Right of Way

Forest Certification

For the purposes of forest certification, Port Wing Boreal Forest State Natural Area is considered a high conservation value forest.

MANAGEMENT AREAS AND CLASSIFICATIONS

This standalone, original portion of Port Wing Boreal Forest State Natural Area, consists of one native community management area. An additional area within the South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area is also managed as a native community management area and designated as part of Port Wing Boreal Forest State Natural Area. The two areas have nearly identical objectives and prescriptions.

Property Management

Objectives

- Manage upland stands towards a mixed forest of long-lived species such as white pine, red pine, white cedar and white spruce. Provide older age classes.
- Provide beach access points for low-impact, undeveloped, nonmotorized recreation.

Common Elements

Apply Common Elements for General Property Management Practices and Recreation Facilities and their Management.

Guidance for use of Common Elements can be found on page 13. If management described in this plan conflicts with Common Elements, apply the management described in this document.

Prescriptions

- In general, allow natural processes to determine ecological characteristics. Exceptions may include salvage and replanting trees following natural disturbance events such as wildfire or blow down. Balsam fir may be removed in select areas of the uplands to reduce fuel loads and the associated risk of wildfire.
- Maintain a parking area at the end of Quarry Point Road. No additional recreational features will be developed.
- Provide signage as necessary near the parking area and beach to educate the public regarding the ecological context of the site and allowable uses of the property.

WISCONSIN POINT BIRD SANCTUARY STATE HABITAT AREA

PROPERTY OVERVIEW

Wisconsin Point Bird Sanctuary State Habitat Area is the proposed name for a property currently named “Statewide Natural Area.” The property was purchased to provide nesting and foraging habitat for uncommon species of shorebirds. The department is working with partners, including but not limited to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) on a project to enhance the shorebird nesting habitat conditions at Wisconsin Point. The project is funded by EPA and being constructed on DNR property by ACOE.

Current State Ownership:	7 acres
Fee Title:	7 acres
Easement:	0 acres

Property Management

The purpose of Wisconsin Point Bird Sanctuary State Habitat Area is primarily to provide nesting and foraging habitat for shorebirds. No recreational features are present on the property. Management of the property will follow the objectives and prescriptions in this section.

Objectives

- Manage this property primarily as a shorebird nesting habitat site with assistance from partner organizations.

Prescriptions

- Utilizing mechanical techniques and herbicide, if needed, maintain a vegetation-free, sand/cobble beach for nesting shorebirds. Work with partners to construct habitat features as necessary.
- Continue to seasonally close the site to public access to ensure habitat protection and nesting success.
- Do not develop any facilities inconsistent with the primary purpose of the property as a bird sanctuary. Primitive trails and viewing platforms are considered consistent with the purpose of the property and may be constructed if appropriate.

Common Elements

Apply Common Elements for General Property Management Practices.

Guidance for use of Common Elements can be found on page 13. If management described in this plan conflicts with Common Elements, apply the management described in this document.



OTHER STATE HABITAT AREAS

Seven state habitat areas, shown in Table 2.63 and managed primarily for wildlife, are present in the Superior Coastal Plain region. All names shown in Table 2.63 are proposed. For current names, please see the Real Estate Action Item table.

Table 2.63. Other Superior Coastal Plain State Habitat Areas

Property	GIS Acres	County	Access
Bad River State Habitat Area	36	Ashland	Water access via the Bad River
Potato River State Habitat Area	85	Ashland	Water access via the Potato River
Saxine Creek State Habitat Area	268	Bayfield	Via STH 13.
Schacte Creek State Habitat Area	39	Bayfield	Via CTH A
St. Louis River State Habitat Area - Closed to public	36	Douglas	This property is closed to public access.
Town of Morse State Habitat Area	720	Ashland	The property is adjacent to Copper Falls State Park and can be access by foot from the park on the North Country Trail. It can also be accessed via a parking area on Will Road.
Town of Saxon State Habitat Area	934	Iron	This property is composed of eight distinct parcels, access is available to most of the parcels via Reservation Highway 7 and Graveyard Creek Road. Other parcels may only be accessed via streams.

All but one of these habitat areas have no developed facilities. Town of Morse State Habitat Area has one small parking area. The North Country Trail continues from Copper Falls State Park into Town of Morse State Habitat Area.

Special Attributes

Saxine Creek State Habitat Area is within the globally significant Coastal Headlands and Estuaries COA.

LAND COVER

Land cover on these properties is primarily a mix of upland deciduous and upland conifer cover types, with areas of forested and other wetlands also present. The Property Planning Viewer or WisFIRS can be consulted for exact cover types on individual properties.

MANAGEMENT AREAS AND CLASSIFICATIONS

Each of the properties in Table 2.63 is composed of one habitat management area. Manage these State Habitat Areas according to Common Elements for all properties, including management for general property and recreation management and management by habitat type. Reference Table 2.2 to identify relevant Common Elements for habitat types. Common Elements are located on the DNR Property Planning web page. If a management objective

or prescription conflicts with Common Elements or those elements for all fishery areas, follow the property-specific management.

Property-Specific Prescriptions

- Maintain North Country National Scenic Trail as a primitive to lightly-developed nonmotorized trail at Town of Morse State Habitat Area. Trail re-routing may occur after consultation between the property manager, Bureau of Parks and Recreation Management, and wildlife biologist.

STATE-OWNED ISLANDS

The Superior Coastal Plain, as a region rich in rivers, lakes and flowages, also contains many islands owned by the State of Wisconsin. Islands owned by DNR may be designated under several administrative names, with some being included in wildlife area or fishery area boundaries. This section outlines management for those islands under the designation of state-owned island. State-owned islands are unsurveyed and unattached islands in inland lakes north of townships 33 and 34, granted to the State of Wisconsin from the federal government through House Bill No. 13417, introduced in 1911 and passed in 1912. The number of state-owned islands changes as surveying methods improve, property disputes are resolved, and water levels vary. Islands not recognized when the initial grant from the federal government occurred in 1911 are still granted to the State of Wisconsin as they are recognized as meeting the criteria of the initial act.

The Superior Coastal Plain region contains 46 state-owned islands. The federal government granted these islands to Wisconsin to be added to the state's forest reserves. As such, all state-owned islands are under the administrative control of the Division of Forestry. State-owned islands are managed according to department Handbook 2861 – State Owned Island Handbook and the following state statutes and administrative codes:

- Section 28.02(1), Wis. Stats. defines state-owned islands as state forest lands.
- Section 28.02(4), Wis. Stats. establishes that sale of state-owned islands is subject to the same restrictions as the sale of state forest lands.
- Section 28.02(6), Wis. Stats. prohibits leases on state-owned islands after June 25, 1925, except existing leases to charitable and nonprofit organizations and where improvements had been made.
- Section 29.27(3), Wis. Stats. governs the construction, identification and removal of waterfowl blinds on state lands.
- Chapter NR 45, Wis. Adm. Code pertains to the conduct of visitors to state parks, state forests, and all state-owned islands.
- Section NR 1.31, Wis. Adm. Code establishes that the department maintains state-owned islands in as natural and undisturbed condition as possible while permitting limited public use on islands suited for water route camping or day use.
- Section NR 1.48, Wis. Adm. Code further provides that no leases for private use shall be executed, extended, or renewed, except if the Secretary determines that the lease will serve a public benefit or provide for public use.

State-owned islands are named according to the county and lake in which they are found. Maps for these islands can be found in Table A.1. Those state-owned islands for which this plan establishes management are:

- State Owned Islands - Bayfield County - Siskiwit Lake - Long Island
- State Owned Islands - Bayfield County - Siskiwit Lake - Round Island
- State Owned Islands - Bayfield County - Siskiwit Lake - Siskiwit Island

These property names are the proposed names. For current names, please see the Real Estate Action Item table. Other state-owned islands not currently recognized as such, but falling within the Superior Coastal Plain Ecological Landscape, will be covered under this plan at the time of designation as a state-owned island.

Property Management

The primary purpose of state-owned islands is to enhance the aesthetics of the natural environment. All state-owned islands covered under this plan are classified as Scenic Resource Management Areas. The following management objectives and prescriptions apply.

Objectives

- Manage islands primarily for aesthetics, fish and wildlife habitat, and related recreational uses. Species and natural community management should be consistent with the surrounding landscape.
- In addition to managing for aesthetics, follow the DNR State-Owned Islands Handbook guidelines for island classification and management. Island classification determination is at the discretion of the property management team.

Prescriptions

- Use passive management to preserve aesthetic value and wildlife habitat. To the degree feasible and practicable, design and conduct vegetation and other land management activities, including practices listed in Common Elements for a cover type, to maintain and enhance an attractive, natural appearing landscape when passive management is ineffective.
- Following a catastrophic event (e.g. wind, fire, ice damage, forest pests), salvage may be completed after consultation and direction by a team consisting of representatives from wildlife, fisheries, Natural Heritage Conservation and forestry programs along with the property manager. Salvage operations should focus on safety and meeting overall vegetation management goals.

Common Elements

Apply Common Elements for General Property Management Practices.

Guidance for use of Common Elements can be found on page 13. If management described in this plan conflicts with Common Elements, apply the management described in this document.

STATE PUBLIC ACCESS SITES

Superior Coastal Plain state public access sites offer access to waterbodies and may contain back-in or carry-in boat access; or they may be undeveloped. As required by NR 1.90, Wis. Adm. Code, it is the goal of the State of Wisconsin to provide, maintain and improve access to Wisconsin's navigable lakes, rivers, and streams for the public. All properties designated as state public access sites in the Superior Coastal Plain will follow the management described in this section, unless otherwise specified. The public access sites in Table 2.64 are covered under this section. Maps for these properties can be found in Table A.1. Any property designated as a state public access site during the period this plan is in effect will also follow the management described in this section.

Table 2.64. Superior Coastal Plain State Public Access Sites

Proposed Name*	GIS Acres	County
Oliver-St. Louis River State Public Access	5	Douglas
Onion River State Public Access	1	Bayfield
Pageant Road State Public Access	2	Ashland

*All properties in Table 2.64 are shown as their proposed name.

Special Attributes

The Oliver-St. Louis River State Public Access is within the continentally significant Pokegama-Nemadji Wetlands COA.

NR 44 Land Management Classification

All state public access sites in the region are classified as Recreation Management Areas: Type 4.

Property Management

Objectives

- Provide, maintain and improve access for the public to the region's waterways commensurate with the individual water's ability to support such access.
- Alone or in cooperation with local government, exercise DNR management and regulatory responsibilities to assure that levels and types of use of navigable waters are consistent with protection of public health, safety and welfare, including protection on natural resources.

Prescriptions

- Maintain or improve current surfacing of boat launches as appropriate for use level and waterbody capacity.

Common Elements

If specific management is not Apply General Property Management Practices and Recreation Facilities and their Management Common Elements.

Determine land cover and apply Habitats and their Management Common Elements. Reference Table 2.2 to determine applicable Common Elements. Management described in Common Elements, which conflicts with management described in this document is not applicable.

Guidance for use of Common Elements can be found on page 13. If management described in this plan conflicts with Common Elements, apply the management described in this document.

NORTH COUNTRY NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL

PROPERTY OVERVIEW

The North Country National Scenic Trail is managed by the National Park Service (NPS) and partner organizations including the North Country Trail Association (NCTA) and DNR. When finished, the trail will stretch over 4,600 miles from North Dakota to the Vermont border of New York. The Wisconsin portion of the trail traverses private and public lands. Many of the public land parcels are designated for other uses and host the trail as a secondary use. However, the department has purchased parcels to support trail routing under the designation of North Country Trail. Properties designated as North Country Trail, including those purchased or designated during the time this plan is in effect, are managed according to this section.

Properties designated as North Country Trail are shown in Table 2.65. Maps for these properties can be found in Table A.1.

Table 2.65. Superior Coastal Plain North Country Trail Properties

Proposed Name*	Acres	County
Black River State North Country Trail Area	200	Douglas
Clear Creek State North Country Trail Area	572	Douglas
Copper Falls State North Country Trail Area	47	Ashland
Nemadji River State North Country Trail Area	102	Douglas
Pattison State Park North Country Trail Area	10	Douglas
Solon Springs State North Country Trail Area	57	Douglas

*All properties in this table are currently named "North Country Trail." Names shown are proposed.

Property Management

The properties in Table 2.65 are classified as Recreation Management Areas: Type 3. Apply management described in this section.

Objectives

- Maintain property primarily for North Country Trail use. Secondary uses, are allowed as authorized by the Bureau of Parks and Recreation Management. Manage property to maintain and improve trail safety, aesthetics and trail-associated infrastructure.

Common Elements

Apply General Property Management Practices and Recreation Facilities and their Management Common Elements.

Determine land cover and apply Habitats and their Management Common Elements. Reference Table 2.2 to determine applicable Common Elements. Management described in Common Elements, which conflicts with management described in this document is not applicable.

Guidance for use of Common Elements can be found on page 13. If management described in this plan conflicts with Common Elements, apply the management described in this document.



Prescriptions

- Allow construction of recreational facilities including small shelters, vault toilets or box latrines, and campsites.
- Construct and maintain North Country Trail segments in accordance with the National Park Service's North Country National Scenic Trail standards (National Park Service, 1996).
- Manage forests primarily for safety and aesthetics where appropriate. Where feasible and appropriate given the overall objective of the property, follow considerations in Common Elements for habitat type when deciding management options.

STATE TRAILS

Outside of natural feature trails, such as the North Country Trail, the state's trail network mainly consists of rail-based trails and utility corridors that occasionally employ road connections. State trails located on converted rail corridors in the planning region include the Wild Rivers and Gandy Dancer trails and the Tri-County Corridor. These state trails are developed and operated through a partnership model or cooperative management agreement with a local unit of government. In this partnership model, the department typically holds the land ownership or trail interest rights, while the partners develop, maintain and operate the trail. The managing partner conducts the planning processes by agreement to determine which recreational uses will be allowed on the property based on the physical characteristics of the trail, compatibility of users, local ordinances, and public input. Trail management is not discussed in this plan because the trails are managed and operated by local units of government through agreements with DNR.

The Wisconsin 2003 State Trails Network Plan, which was approved by the Natural Resources Board, provides authorization for the DNR to pursue acquisition of any abandoned rail grade or other corridor identified in the 2003 plan. As a result, corridor extensions and connections are authorized through that plan rather than through individual master plans.

REAL ESTATE SECTION

OVERVIEW

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources purchases land to manage and protect natural resources and to provide recreational opportunities to all residents and visitors to the State of Wisconsin. Through the land acquisition program, wetlands, forests, scenic areas, prairies, savannas, wildlife and fish habitat, rare species habitat, glacial features and other resources are being protected and managed.

The Real Estate Section within the department's Bureau of Facilities and Lands acquires land through fee title, easements, donations and leases. The section also conveys leases, easements, agreements and permits associated with land ownership. The section also manages the selling of land no longer necessary for the state's use for conservation purposes. It implements the payment in lieu of tax system (PILT), resolves trespass settlements and engages in other activities aimed at preparing the land for long-term public use and benefit.

REAL ESTATE MANAGEMENT AND MASTER PLANNING

Through master planning, the department's entire real estate portfolio is reviewed and analyzed. The topics listed below are all considered and reviewed during a planning process. This analysis allows the department to identify future real estate management goals, which are then included as a part of the master plan.

Land Acquisition

The department acquires lands under the authority of sec. 23.09(2)(d), Wis. Stats., from willing sellers. At times, it is in the best interest of the department and landowner for the department to acquire partial rights to a property (easement or lease). Acquisition priorities are identified in the master plan and are, in most cases, visually represented through the department's project boundaries.

Acquisitions for department properties vary from year to year and are based on several factors, such as resource management or recreation needs and the availability of funding, which may be from a variety of sources.

Land Sales

The department's Natural Resources Board (NRB), at times, may sell lands and structures under its jurisdiction, except central or district office facilities, when the NRB determines that those lands are no longer necessary for the state's use for conservation purposes (sec. 23.15 (1), Wis. Stats.). Upon receiving payment, the department deposits the funds into the conservation fund to be used exclusively for the purpose of purchasing other land for the creating and establishing of public hunting and fishing grounds, wildlife and fish refuges, state parks, and/or land in the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway (sec. 23.15 (4), Wis. Stats.).

Conveyed Easements, Access Permits, and Land Use Agreements

Conveyed Easements provide access across state property for utilities, town roads, county highways and in some cases individuals. Easements are permanent and cannot be changed by a master plan. Access Permits provide access across state property to private land owners adjacent to department lands. Land use agreements provide for a variety of uses on a department property that are consistent with the property's master plan, such as bike trails.

Payment in Lieu of Taxes

The department makes an annual payment in lieu of taxes (PILT) under ss. 70.113 and 70.114, Wis. Stats., to the appropriate municipality for all property it owns in fee title. More detailed information on how the department pays PILT may be at dnr.wi.gov by searching for the keyword "PILT".

Project Boundaries and Stream Bank Easement (SBE) Eligible Streams

Project boundaries and stream bank easement eligible streams are established areas on the landscape, created by a Natural Resources Board (NRB) action, as a preferred area where the department may acquire land. Through the planning process, changes on the landscape and changing recreation and resource needs are identified. These factors may lead to proposed changes to the boundary or SBES in a master plan, under the authority in Manual Code (MC) 2212, MC 2105.2, MC 2210.03, sec. 23.094, Wis. Stats and s. NR 51.60 Admin. Code.

Acquisition Authority

An acquisition authority is created by the NRB, which allows the department to acquire land for a specific purpose/land use. An example of this is the authority to purchase land for Devil's Lake State Park. This authority identifies a targeted area on the landscape within a project boundary to be used for state park purposes. Another example is the Statewide Public Access authority, which allows the department to acquire lands adjacent to rivers and lakes to provide public access to waterways. This authority does not have specific project boundaries; it is statewide in nature. As such, it allows lands to be acquired along these water features anywhere in the state. New, or changes to, existing acquisition authorities are sometimes proposed as a part of the master plan.

Acquisition Goal

When an acquisition authority is created by the NRB, an acquisition acreage goal for that authority is also established. This is the total acreage that can be acquired by the department under that specific acquisition authority. Acquisition goal changes are sometimes proposed as a part of the master plan.

Property Naming

Under the authority of MC 2281.1, the NRB has the authority to name a property that has not been expressly named by the Legislature. Property name changes are sometimes proposed during a master plan.

Property Re-designation

Under the authority of s. NR 1.415, Wis. Admin. Code, the NRB has the authority to periodically review land use designations (acquisition authorities) to determine whether a re-designation will secure better management. Property re-designations are sometimes proposed during a master plan.

REAL ESTATE ACTIONS

Clean up of Project Boundaries

Project boundaries in the past may have been developed using parcel maps or aerial photographs rather than the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) tools that exist today. This GIS technology has improved in accuracy over time. In some cases, it is clear the original intent of the project was to follow the nearest river, road or existing department ownership, but because of changing technology, a boundary line may be slightly "off" from these features. With NRB approval of this plan, where applicable, some project boundaries included in this master plan

will be snapped to or aligned to better define these boundaries. These snapped areas are very small in size, usually less than 0.1 acres, or are snapped a few feet to the nearest feature.

Statewide Scattered Acquisition Property Naming

The Superior Coastal Plan Master Plan includes unnamed properties purchased under a variety of statewide scattered acquisition authorities (Extensive Wildlife, Scattered Wildlife, etc.). These parcels do not currently have a NRB approved (official) local name identifying them. The master plan team used MC 2281.1 as well as internal draft naming guidance to propose names for these properties. Those naming and property grouping recommendations are included as a part of this plan and are described, as applicable, below, as well as in Appendix B and map series AA-AO.

PROPERTY SPECIFIC REAL ESTATE ACTIONS

Bark Bay Slough State Natural Area (Map C)

- Expand the project boundary by 12.71 acres to encompass lands already owned by the department.
- Expand the project boundary by 0.55 acres around lands not currently owned by the department.
 - Net expansion of 13.26 acres.

This is considered clean up to include a parcel owned by the department in the project boundary. The parcel is being managed as a part of the larger State Natural Area.

Bibon Swamp State Natural Area-Proposed Name Bibon Swamp State Natural Area (Map D)

- Establish an official local name of Bibon Swamp State Natural Area
- Reduce the acquisition authority by 320.48 acres.

The addition of the word State to the name is also considered a cleanup action to provide consistency across the entire State Natural Area program. The reduction in acquisition goal is to match the amount of acreage of the project boundary to the allowed acquisition goal.

Scattered Forest Lands (Map D)

- Re-designate this parcel from Scattered Forest Lands to Bibon Swamp Natural Area.
- Transfer 40 acres of acquisition goal from Scattered Forest Lands to Bibon Swamp Natural Area.
- This parcel will then also be subsequently named Bibon Swamp State Natural Area.

This is considered a cleanup action, as the parcels currently fall within the project boundary of the Bibon Swamp Natural Area and are being managed as a part of the larger project.

Big Bay State Park (Map E-2)

- Expand the project boundary by 152 acres to encompass lands already owned by the department.
- Expand the project boundary by 13.75 acres around lands not currently owned by the department.
 - Net expansion of 165.75 acres.
- Increase the acquisition goal by 37.40 acres.

These project boundary expansions are considered a cleanup action to include department owned lands and easements into Big Bay State Park project boundary. The proposed acquisition goal increase is to allow for acquisition within the proposed full project boundary.

Copper Falls State Park (Map F-2)

Expand the project boundary by 77.89 acres to encompass lands already owned by the department.

Expand the project boundary by 86.03 acres around lands not currently owned by the department.

- Net expansion of 163.92 acres.

Proposed increase in the acquisition goal by 342.59 acres.

The acquisition goal increase is to allow for acquisition within the full project boundary area. The project boundary expansions are considered clean up to include lands currently owned by the department in the project. Expansion areas are to increase recreation access and improvement management.

Scattered Wildlife – Proposed Name Town of Morse State Habitat Area (Map F-2)

- Establish an official local name of Town of Morse State Habitat Area for these parcels.

The name of Town of Morse is a locally recognized name for these parcels.

North Country National Scenic Trail – Proposed Name Copper Falls State Park North Country Trail Area (Map F-2)

- Establish an official local name of Copper Falls State Park North Country Trail Area for these parcels.

The name of Copper Falls State Park is a locally recognized name for these parcels, since they are adjacent to the State Park.

Lost Creek Bog Natural Area- Proposed Name Lost Creek Bog State Natural Area (Map G)

- Increase the acquisition goal by 200.26 acres.
- Establish an official local name of Lost Creek Bog State Natural Area

The department owns more acres then the existing acquisition goal. This is considered clean up to account for a donation the department accepted for this project that was not originally planned for in the acquisition goal. The addition of the word State to the name is also considered a cleanup action to provide consistency across the entire State Natural Area program.

Pattison State Park (Map H-2)

- Expand the project boundary by 40.58 acres to encompass a North Country National Scenic Trail Parcel already owned by the department, adjacent to the State Park.
- Expand the project boundary by 58.01 acres around lands not currently owned by the department.
- Contract the project boundary by 72.09 acres.
 - Net expansion of 26.83 acres.
- Increase the acquisition goal by 113.46 acres.

- Two small parcels are located outside the project boundary (one currently and one will be upon approve of the proposed contraction). These two parcels should be further analyzed in the future for possible sale or exchange.

The project boundary expansions and acreage goal increase are to clean up property lines and provide better public access on the east side of the park. The project boundary contraction is over an area currently privately owned and utilized for a gravel pit. It is unlikely the department would ever acquire this property.

North Country National Scenic Trail – Proposed Name Black River State North Country Trail Area (Map H-2)

- Establish an official local name of Black River North Country Trail Area for these parcels.

The name of Black River is a locally recognized name for these parcels.

North Country National Scenic Trail – Proposed Name Pattison State Park North Country Trail Area (Map H-2)

- Establish an official local name of Pattison State Park North Country Trail Area for these parcels.

The name of Pattison State Park is a locally recognized name for these parcels, since the parcel is adjacent to the State Park.

South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area – Proposed Name South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area + Unit Name (described below) (Map I-2A-Map I-2F)

- Re-designate the South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area to be South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area.
- Expand the project boundary by 295.92 acres to encompass lands already owned by the department.
 - A portion of this expansion is to include lands being re-designated from Statewide Habitat Areas, Statewide Natural Area and North Fish Creek Stream IMP to the South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area.
- Expand the project boundary by 194.17 acres around lands not currently owned by the department.
 - Net expansion of 490.09 acres.
- Find that a 0.72-acre parcel of land located outside of the project boundary (proposed Sioux River Unit) adjacent to South Niemisto Road is no longer needed for the state's use for conservation purposes and should be offered for sale.
- Find that a 0.59-acre parcel of land located outside of the project boundary (proposed Fish Creek Unit) is no longer needed for the state's use for conservation purposes and should be offered for sale to the adjoining landowners, since it is a landlocked parcel.
- Find that a 0.67-acre parcel of land located outside of the project boundary (proposed Fish Creek Unit) is no longer needed for the state's use for conservation purposes and should be offered for sale to the adjoining landowners, since it is a landlocked parcel.
- Find that a 1.06-acre parcel of land located outside of the project boundary (proposed Fish Creek Unit), off of Old US 2, is no longer needed for the state's use for conservation purposes and should be offered for sale.

- Hold the 20-acre parcel located outside of the project boundary (proposed Cranberry River Unit), for further study. The parcel could be used for a possible exchange, if a parcel of higher conservation value were found for an exchange.
- Proposed increase in the acquisition goal 7,584.30 acres.
- Transfer of 50 acres of acquisition goal to South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area from Statewide Habitat Areas.
- Transfer of 40 acres of acquisition goal to South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area from Statewide Natural Area.
- Transfer of 40 acres of acquisition goal to South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area from North Fish Creek IMP.
- Net increase in acquisition goal of 7,714.30 acres.
- Change the official local name of South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area to be:
 - (Map I-2A) South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area – Cranberry River Unit.
 - (Map I-2B) South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area – Fish Creek Unit.
 - (Map I-2C) South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area – Flag River Unit.
 - (Map I-2D) South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area – Iron River Unit.
 - (Map I-2E) South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area – Pikes Creek Unit.
 - (Map I-2F) South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area – Sioux River Unit.

The proposed acquisition goal increase is to allow for acquisition within the full project boundary. With this increase, the acquisition goal acreage will match the project boundary goal acreage.

All project boundary expansion proposals are to include lands the department owns or has an easement on except in three areas. The expansion areas around lands not currently owned by the department will facilitate linkages of existing department lands to provide increased access and recreation opportunities on the property. The expansion area on the Cranberry River Unit on the northwest side of the property will be to facilitate public access. An easement would also be needed from the power company, which owns land off of Buckley Road headed south to this expansion area. The site contains mixed-age deciduous and coniferous forest, and the remote nature of the watershed would create a unique backcountry experience for the general public. The property would provide an excellent addition to the South Shore project if acquired in the future.

The expansion on the proposed Flag River Unit, is to include an area that currently has wastewater treatment ponds located on it. These ponds are part of a proposed restoration project that will turn the ponds back into sedge meadow wetland habitat. The department is currently working with the Town of Port Wing on this project. Carry in boat access is also a part of this restoration plan to provide public access to Bibon Lake, which has a few access points. The Town owns land to the south of the project and intends to put in a few public parking spaces for the site along the road.

The primary purpose and management on this property is fisheries based. Therefore, the proposal is to change the main project name from South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area to South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area to recognize this. Fishery Area is defined in statute and more clearly communicates the primary intent of this property. Wildlife management is still a critical component on this property and will continue to be into the future even with this name change; much the same as other fishery areas around the state. Since this project is comprised

of six distinct geographic areas, unit names are proposed to be added for enhanced communication and recognition of each area of the project. The unit names reference locally recognized features will be added to the main name of South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area.

Statewide Habitat Areas – Proposed to become part of South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area (see above, proposed designation is South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area – Cranberry River Unit) (Map I-2A)

- Re-designate these parcels from Statewide Habitat Areas to South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area (see above, proposed designation is South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area – Cranberry River Unit).
- Transfer 50 acres of acquisition authority from Statewide Habitat Areas to South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area (see above, proposed designation is South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area – Cranberry River Unit).

These two parcels currently fall within the South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area project boundary (see above, proposed designation is South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area-Cranberry River Unit). This re-designation is considered a cleanup action, since the parcels are already being managed as a part of the larger South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area project.

Statewide Natural Area (Nourse Sugarbush State Natural Area) – Proposed to become part of South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area (see above, proposed designation is South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area – Pikes Creek Unit) (Map I-2E)

- Re-designate these parcels from Statewide Habitat Areas to South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area (see above, proposed designation is South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area – Pikes Creek Unit).
- Transfer 40 acres of acquisition authority from Statewide Natural Area to South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area (see above, proposed designation is South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area – Cranberry River Unit).

This parcel currently falls within the South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area project boundary (see above, proposed designation is South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area-Pikes Creek Unit). This re-designation is considered a cleanup action, since the parcels are already being managed as a part of the larger South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area project.

North Fish Creek Stream IMP (Map I-2B)

- Establish 40 acres of acquisition goal for North Fish Creek Stream IMP to account for what is currently owned.
- Re-designate this parcel from North Fish Creek Stream IMP to South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area (see above, proposed designation is South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area – Fish Creek Unit).
- Transfer 40 acres of acquisition goal from North Fish Creek Stream IMP to South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area (see above, proposed designation is South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area – Fish Creek Unit).
- Decommission the North Fish Creek Stream IMP project after re-designation occurs.

The North Fish Creek Stream IMP acquisition authority does not have any acquisition goal established. For cleanup and accounting purposes, the plan recommends establishing a goal of 40 acres to account for the total acres owned for North Fish Creek Stream IMP. Then to transfer that goal amount to South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife

Area (see above, proposed designation is South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area – Fish Creek Unit), since the parcel will be re-designated as South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area. The North Fish Creek Stream IMP project is comprised of one parcel located within the South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area project boundary (see above, proposed change to South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area-Fish Creek Unit). The parcel is currently being managed as a part of the South Shore Lake Superior project and is considered a cleanup action to provide clarity in reporting and property management in the future.

St. Louis River Stream Bank Protection Area (Map J-2)

- Establish an official local name of St. Louis River Streambank Protection Area

This is considered a cleanup action, combining the words Stream Bank into one, Streambank.

White River Fishery Area - Bayfield (Map K-1A)

- Expand the project boundary by 45.96 acres to encompass lands already owned by the department.
- Expand the project boundary by 7.08 acres around lands not currently owned by the department.
- Contract the project boundary by 22.64 acres.
 - Net expansion of 30.40 acres.

The contractions of the project boundary are to resolve apparent errors in the project boundary. The Fish program is not considering acquisition North of HWY H in this area. The expansion of the project boundary off of Delta-Drummond Road is to resolve an apparent error. The original intent of the project boundary was to extend along the river South of HWY H and the project boundary was drawn North of HWY H.

Bayfield Peninsula – Proposed Name Pageant Road State Public Access (Map AA)

- Re-designate these parcels from Bayfield Peninsula to Statewide Public Access.
- Transfer 1.9 acres of acquisition goal from Bayfield Peninsula to Statewide Public Access.
- Establish an official local name of Pageant Road State Public Access.

The re-designation and acreage goal transfer are clean-up actions related to the naming of this property. The name of Pageant Road is a locally recognized name for this parcel.

Gift Lands (Map AB)

- Re-designate these parcels from Gift Lands to Brule River State Forest.
- Transfer 160 acres of acquisition goal from Gift Lands to Brule River State Forest.

This is considered a cleanup action, as the parcels currently fall within the Brule River State Forest project boundary and are currently being managed as a part of the State Forest

Gift Lands – Proposed Name Bad River State Habitat Area (Map AC)

- Re-designate these parcels from Gift Lands to Habitat Area.
- Transfer 35.55 acres of acquisition goal from Gift Lands to Habitat Area.
- Establish an official local name of Bad River State Habitat Area.

The name of Bad River is a locally recognized name for these parcels. This parcel was identified during the Act 20 land sales process as a parcel to be offered for sale. The department continues marketing efforts on this parcel and



it could be sold in the future. Until that time, this established name will allow the parcel to be more easily identifiable and trackable in department IT systems.

Gift Lands – Proposed Name Potato River State Habitat Area (Map AD)

- Re-designate these parcels from Gift Lands to Habitat Area.
- Transfer 84.85 acres of acquisition goal from Gift Lands to Habitat Area.
- Establish an official local name of Potato River State Habitat Area.
- Assign Fish as the administrative land owner of this property.

The name of Potato River is a locally recognized name for these parcels. This parcel was identified during the Act 20 land sales process as a parcel to be offered for sale. The department continues marketing efforts on this parcel and it could be sold in the future. Until that time, this established name will allow the parcel to be more easily identifiable and trackable in department IT systems.

REM-Iron River – Proposed Name Schacte Creek State Habitat Area (Map AE)

- Establish 38.56 acres of acquisition goal for REM-Iron River to account for what is currently owned.
- Re-designate this parcel from REM-Iron River to Schacte Creek State Habitat Area.
- Transfer the newly established 38.56 acres of acquisition goal from REM-Iron River to Habitat Area.
- Establish an official local name of Schacte Creek State Habitat Area.

The REM-Iron River acquisition authority does not have any acquisition goal established. For cleanup and accounting purposes, the plan recommends establishing a goal of 38.56 acres to account for the total acres owned for REM-Iron River. Then to transfer that goal amount to Habitat Area, since the parcel will be re-designated as Habitat Area. The name of Schacte Creek is a locally recognized name for this parcel as the creek runs through the property, while the Iron River does not.

Scattered Forest Lands – Proposed Name Town of Saxon State Habitat Area (Map AF)

- Re-designate these parcels from Scattered Forest Lands to Habitat Area.
- Transfer 934 acres of acquisition goal from Scattered Forest Lands to Habitat Area.
- Establish an official local name of Town of Saxon State Habitat Area.

The name of Town of Saxon is a locally recognized name for these parcels. This parcel was identified during the Act 20 land sales process as a parcel to be offered for sale. The department continues marketing efforts on this parcel and it could be sold in the future. Until that time, this established name will allow the parcel to be more easily identifiable and trackable in department IT systems.

State Owned Islands – Proposed Name State Owned Islands – Bayfield County – Siskiwit Lake – Long Island (Map AG)

- Establish an official local name of State Owned Islands – Bayfield County – Siskiwit Lake – Long Island for these parcels.

The name of State Owned Islands – Bayfield County – Siskiwit Lake – Long Island is the naming structure utilized within Forestry's State Owned Islands Handbook. The use of the County and lake name are locally recognized identifiers for the parcel.

State Owned Islands – Proposed Name State Owned Islands – Bayfield County – Siskiwit Lake – Round Island (Map AG)

- Establish an official local name of State Owned Islands – Bayfield County – Siskiwit Lake – Round Island for these parcels.

The name of State Owned Islands – Bayfield County – Siskiwit Lake – Round Island is the naming structure utilized within Forestry’s State Owned Islands Handbook. The use of the County and lake name are locally recognized identifiers for the parcel.

State Owned Islands – Proposed Name State Owned Islands – Bayfield County – Siskiwit Lake – Siskiwit Island (Map AG)

- Establish an official local name of State Owned Islands – Bayfield County – Siskiwit Lake – Siskiwit Island for these parcels.

The name of State Owned Islands – Bayfield County – Siskiwit Lake – Siskiwit Island is the naming structure utilized within Forestry’s State Owned Islands Handbook. The use of the County and lake name are locally recognized identifiers for the parcel.

Statewide Habitat Areas – Proposed Name Middle River Sea Lamprey Barrier State Habitat Area (Map AH)

- Re-designate these parcels from Statewide Habitat Areas to Habitat Area.
- Establish an official local name of Middle River Sea Lamprey Barrier State Habitat Area

The re-designation is clean-up action related to the naming of this property. This easement exists for hosting a Sea Lamprey Barrier on the Middle River, which is locally recognized as a name for this property.

Statewide Habitat Areas – Proposed Name Saxine Creek State Habitat Area (Map AI)

- Re-designate these parcels from Statewide Habitat Areas to Habitat Area.
- Transfer 268 acres of acquisition goal from Statewide Habitat Area to Habitat Area.
- Establish an official local name of Saxine Creek State Habitat Area.

The re-designation and acreage goal transfer are clean-up actions related to the naming of this property. The name of Saxine Creek is a locally recognized name for this parcel.

Statewide Natural Area – Proposed Name St. Louis River State Habitat Area (Map AJ)

- Re-designate these parcels from Statewide Natural Area to Habitat Area.
- Establish an official local name of St. Louis River State Habitat Area.
- Assign Fish as the administrative land owner of this property.

The re-designation is a clean-up action related to the naming of this property. This closed to the public conservation easement was originally intended to be acquired for the Fisheries program, but since it was acquired with another parcel for the NHC program it was coded incorrectly as a Statewide Natural Area. This transfer of administrative ownership is considered a cleanup action. Since the easement the department holds on this parcel is closed to public

access, the establishment of the name will primarily be for management and information technology systems efficiencies.

Statewide Natural Area – Proposed Name Wisconsin Point Bird Sanctuary State Habitat Area (Map AK)

- Re-designate these parcels from Statewide Natural Area to Habitat Area.
- Transfer 7.35 acres of acquisition goal from Statewide Natural Area to Habitat Area.
- Establish an official local name of Wisconsin Point Bird Sanctuary State Habitat Area.

The re-designation and acreage goal transfer are clean-up actions related to the naming of this property. The name of Wisconsin Point Bird Sanctuary is a locally recognized name for this parcel.

Statewide Public Access – Proposed Name Oliver – St. Louis River State Public Access (Map AL)

- Establish an official local name of Oliver – St. Louis River State Public Access

The public access is located in the Town of Oliver and provides access to the St. Louis River, so these are locally recognized features associated with this property.

Statewide Public Access – Proposed Name Onion River State Public Access (Map AM)

- Establish an official local name of Onion River State Public Access

This parcel provides public access to the Onion River, so this is a locally recognized feature associated with the property.

North Country National Scenic Trail – Proposed Name Solon Springs State North Country Trail Area (Map AN)

- Establish an official local name of Solon Springs State North Country Trail Area for these parcels.

The name of Solon Springs is a locally recognized name for these parcels, since they are located within the town of Solon Springs.

North Country National Scenic Trail – Proposed Name Nemadji River State North Country Trail Area (Map AO)

- Establish an official local name of Nemadji River State North Country Trail Area for these parcels.

The name of Nemadji River is a locally recognized name for these parcels, since they are located along the river.

North Country National Scenic Trail – Proposed Name Clear Creek State North Country Trail Area (Map AO)

- Establish an official local name of Clear Creek State North Country Trail Area for these parcels.

The name of Clear Creek is a locally recognized name for these parcels.

St Louis River Streambank Fee Protection Area

- Increase the acquisition goal by 1081.37 acres.

This acquisition goal increase is considered a cleanup action to account for all acreage included in the existing project boundary.



Amnicon Falls State Park

- Increase the acquisition goal by 1.88 acres.

This is considered clean up action to match the goal to current department ownership.

Chapter 3 : Regional and Property Analysis

The Regional and Property Analysis component of this plan describes the ecological, cultural, economic, and recreational context of the Superior Coastal Plain region and the considerations for planning that arise from that context. Regional context characterizes property resources within the ecological landscape and highlights their degree of significance both regionally and locally. This analysis identifies significant ecological and recreational needs of the region, and potential social demands or constraints affecting these properties.

The regional analysis is a good tool for evaluating the significance of each property in meeting the region's needs. The regional boundaries for this plan are based on the Superior Coastal Plain Ecological Landscape. The analysis describes the existing natural resources, recreational, and socio-economic context of the Superior Coastal Plain.

ECOLOGICAL LANDSCAPES OF WISCONSIN

The Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin (WDNR, 2015b) is a reference compendium delineating the 16 Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin. Ecological landscapes are areas with similar ecology and management potential. Each landscape chapter within the book contains descriptions of ecological resources and socioeconomic condition descriptions of Wisconsin's role in sustaining these resources within regional and global perspectives and management opportunities best suited to the region. This analysis draws from Chapter 21 of The Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin, which describes the Superior Coastal Plain. Descriptions of natural resources, socio-economic characteristics and recreational resources for this region are provided in great detail in Chapter 21 of The Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin. The entirety of this chapter is incorporated by reference for purposes of this planning document. All chapters of this reference compendium, including some that compare and contrast regional attributes, are accessible on the Wisconsin DNR website (dnr.wi.gov) keywords "Ecological Landscapes" then "Superior Coastal Plain."

SUPERIOR COASTAL PLAIN

The Superior Coastal Plain (SCP) region is 1,416 square miles in Douglas, Bayfield and Ashland counties. Figure 1 shows the SCP landscape in relation to the other Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin.

Lake Superior has had an enormous influence on the climate, landforms, soils, vegetation, and economy of the Superior Coastal Plain. Freshwater estuaries are present along the coast. Inland lakes are rare, but lagoons, some of them quite large, occur behind the coastal sandspits. Important rivers include the St. Louis, Nemadji, Bad, White, Amnicon, and Bois Brule. Coldwater streams originate in the aquifers at the northern edge of the Northwest Sands in Bayfield County and flow north across the Superior Coastal Plain before emptying into Lake Superior. Many of the streams flowing across the clay plain suffered severe damage to their banks and beds during the era of heavy logging in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Some of them have not yet recovered and their slumping banks continue to dump sediments into the main channels, and ultimately, into Lake Superior. Water (and soil) management can be challenging in this Ecological Landscape.

The region is known for its unique, poorly-drained reddish lacustrine clay soils on either side of the Bayfield Peninsula. The clay deposits include lenses of sand or coarse-textured till; these areas are especially erosion-prone when they are cut by streams.

The region's climate is moderated by the proximity to Lake Superior, averaging 32 inches of rain and 87 inches of snow. The growing season is short, averaging 122 days per year. Cool summers, deep snows (including lake effect

snows), high humidity, fog, mist, wave spray, currents, ice, and strong winds (along exposed coastlines, where blow-down events are frequent) affect parts of the Ecological Landscape, especially near Lake Superior.

ECOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS AND MANAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

This section summarizes the ecological characteristics and management opportunities of the Superior Coastal Plain ecological landscape. Information is sourced from numerous documents, including primarily:

- The Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin: an assessment of ecological resources and a guide to planning sustainable management (WDNR, 2015b)
- Rapid Ecological Assessments (for specific property groups; WDNR)
- Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan (WDNR 2015)

Two prominent features in the Superior Coastal Plain Ecological Landscape are considered significant on both a Wisconsin and global scale: the Lake Superior shoreline (including unique coastal estuaries and river corridors) and the Apostle Islands. The unique red clay wetlands and the Boreal Forests of the Superior Coastal Plain are considered significant both in Wisconsin and in the United States as a whole. These distinctive landscape features play a critical role in maintaining Wisconsin's unique biological diversity.

The reddish soil here is found nowhere else in Wisconsin. Poorly-drained reddish lacustrine clays, especially erosion-prone when cut by streams, exist on both sides of the Bayfield Peninsula. In contrast, the Bayfield Peninsula itself has a variety of clays, silts, loams, and sands. Organic soils in this region are rare and limited to peatlands on the margins of coastal lagoons.

Historic vegetation and composition of the boreal forests were characterized by older forests and conifers (e.g. eastern hemlock, eastern white pine, white spruce, balsam fir, and northern white cedar. These forests no longer exist in the same magnitude due to the harvesting and slash fires of the late 1800s and early 1900s known as the Great Cutover. Many forests now are relatively young and dominated by aspen and maple. While conifers are currently underrepresented, their increase is the current target of forestry restoration and management practices.

The distinctive Lake Superior Coastal Plain habitats such as rock cliffs and shores, coastal estuaries, fens, bogs, ridge and swale complexes, beaches and dunes, and boreal forests support abundant wildlife. Many rare plant species occur here, including 16 known only to this landscape and five that are globally rare. Rare animal species including the charismatic American marten, spruce grouse, boreal owls and an occasional moose are present in the Superior Coastal Plain. Superior Coastal Plain habitats also provide critical nesting, feeding, and resting areas for a wide variety of migratory waterfowl, songbirds, shorebirds and raptors. Islands along the Lake Superior shores host enormous rookeries of terns, herons, and gulls.

Lake Superior supports an important sport fishery for lake trout, coho salmon, lake whitefish, brown trout, lake herring, and rainbow smelt, with walleye, smallmouth bass, northern pike, and yellow perch in the shallower bays. Lake Superior tributaries are important spawning areas for trout and salmon. Some of these noteworthy rivers are included in this chapter under significant management opportunities.

Current land cover lacks the significance of the previously extensive forests. Approximately 57% is classified as timberland, with aspen and birch forests managed for pulp, which have increased in prominence over the formerly dominant boreal conifers. Second growth northern hardwood forests are interspersed. Some of the deep stream valleys contain important refugia for vegetation not directly affected by the Great Cutover. Small but exceptional stands of old-growth forest occur on the Apostle Islands.

Deforestation has led to severe spring flooding during and following snowmelt, exacerbated by the clay soils. Flooding in many watersheds has increased due to the increased acres of open land, rate and timing of snowmelt and the greater overall quantity of water reaching streams. Government agencies and landowners are making efforts toward reforestation and stream restoration to help correct this problem.

Cool temperatures, coupled with the extended time needed for the heavy soils to warm in spring limit agriculture to dairy, beef, or poultry production. The growing season of the Superior Coastal Plain is generally too short for row crops. Scattered old, grassy fields and pastures on the landscape host populations of rare grassland birds. Specialty crops such as apples and berries are grown on the Bayfield Peninsula, due to its soil and longer growing season, owed to the moderating effects of Lake Superior.

Significant ecological management opportunities for the Superior Coastal Plain Ecological Landscape include:

- Lake Superior is the largest freshwater lake in the world by area; it is deeper and holds more water than any lake in North America.
- The Apostle Islands host exceptional examples of old-growth forest, coastal wetlands, and sandstone cliffs.
- Southwestern Lake Superior features many sandscapes, drowned river mouths, and freshwater estuaries.
- The best – and only – opportunities in Wisconsin to manage for the unique Boreal (Clay Plain) Forest occur here.
- Red clay wetlands near Superior support a diverse flora including many rare plants, some found nowhere else in the state.
- Corridors of the larger rivers feature protection opportunities for unusual natural communities, habitat for rare species, and routes for migrating and dispersing animals. Corridors of the St. Louis, Nemadji, Brule, and Bad Rivers are especially notable.
- Important migratory Bird Concentration Areas occur in/around the St. Louis River Estuary, Chequamegon Bay, and Apostle Islands.
- Important nesting sites for colonial birds such as terns, gulls, and cormorants occur here.
- Scattered rare species populations, including plants and animals found nowhere else in Wisconsin.
- Miscellaneous rare communities or habitats (not covered by previous bullets) underrepresented on public lands or in protected areas are found in the Superior Coastal Plain.

The unique features and significant management opportunities listed are associated with distinctive natural communities, aquatic features, and select habitats. This relationship is portrayed in the Table 3.1, taken directly from The Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin (WDNR, 2015b).

Table 3.1. Ecological Features and their Associated Natural Communities

Ecological Feature	Associated Natural Communities, Aquatic Features, and Selected Habitats
Lake Superior	Great Lakes Barrens Great Lakes Beach Great Lakes Bedrock Shore Great Lakes Dune Great Lakes Ridge and Swale Shore Fen Lake Superior
Apostle Islands	Boreal Forest Northern Dry Forest Northern Dry-mesic Forest Northern Mesic forest Great Lakes Barrens Great Lakes Ridge and Swale Shore Fen Interdunal Wetland Ephemeral Pond Dry Cliff Moist Cliff Great Lakes Dunes Great Lakes Beach
Freshwater estuaries	Black Spruce Swamp Tamarack Swamp Alder Thicket Shrub-carr Northern Sedge Meadow Poor Fen Shore Fen Emergent Marsh Marsh – Wild Rice Submergent Marsh
Boreal (Clay Plain) Forest	Boreal Forest Northern Mesic Forest Ephemeral Pond
Red clay wetlands	Boreal Forest Alder Thicket Shrub-carr Northern Sedge Meadow Emergent Marsh Submergent Marsh

Ecological Feature	Associated Natural Communities, Aquatic Features, and Selected Habitats
River corridors	Northern Dry forest Northern Dry-Mesic Forest Northern Mesic Forest Northern Wet-Mesic Forest Northern Wet Forest Northern Hardwood Swamp Floodplain Forest Coldwater Stream Coolwater Stream Warmwater River Warmwater Stream
Migratory Bird Concentration Areas	Boreal Forest Northern Dry Forest Northern Dry-mesic Forest Northern Mesic Forest Emergent Marsh Shore Fen Great Lakes Dune Great Lakes Beach Great Lakes Ridge and Swale Lake Superior
Colonial birds: gulls, terns, cormorants	Emergent Marsh Shore Fen Great Lakes Dune Great Lakes Beach Great Lakes Ridge and Swale Lake Superior
Rare species	Virtually all natural communities
Miscellaneous opportunities	Boreal Forest Northern Mesic Forest Surrogate Grasslands Open Bog Emergent Marsh – Wild Rice Clay Seepage Bluff

An “ecological feature” is a natural community or group of natural communities or other significant habitats that occur in close proximity and may be affected by similar natural disturbances or interdependent in some other way. Ecological features were defined as management opportunities because individual natural communities often occur as part of a continuum (e.g., prairie to savanna to woodland, or marsh to meadow to shrub swamp to wet forest) or characteristically occur within a group of interacting community types (e.g., lakes within a forested matrix) that for some purposes can more effectively be planned and managed together rather than as separate entities. This does

not imply that management actions for the individual communities or habitats are the same. See Chapter 7, “Natural Communities, Aquatic Features, and Selected Habitats of Wisconsin,” for definitions of natural community types.

SOCIOECONOMIC AND CULTURAL CONTEXT OF THE SUPERIOR COASTAL PLAIN

The socioeconomic and cultural context of a region must be considered in any planning process. While this plan focuses on the resource and recreation management of the properties, underlying socioeconomic and cultural contexts are important in understanding the needs of the public when planning the properties of the Superior Coastal Plain. Due to the method by which economic and cultural data is collected and made available, the context given here is for the counties intersected by the Superior Coastal Plain, rather than the landscape itself. The data for those counties, Douglas, Bayfield, and Ashland, is derived from two sources: the United States Census Bureau and “The Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin.” A very small portion of the landscape falls in Iron County, however, no DNR properties are present within this portion of the SCP, so Iron County is not part of this context section.

Socioeconomic Context

Population, Income, and Housing

As of 2016, the total population of SCP counties was 74,628 people at a density of approximately 20 people per square mile. This makes up 1.3% of the state’s population and is lower than the average population density statewide; which is 105 persons per square mile. The two urban centers of the region are the City of Superior (2016 population of 26,676) in Douglas County and the City of Ashland (2016 population of 8,216) in Ashland County. In comparison to the rest of Wisconsin, the population of the Superior Coastal Plain counties is older and has a lower percentage of persons 25-49.

Compared to the other ecological landscapes, the counties of the SCP have the lowest housing density at 11.9 units per square mile. Seasonal homes, however, are quite prevalent. These homes comprise 20.8% of the total housing stock in the SCP counties, compared to a 6.3% average statewide. This high percentage of seasonal homes has created the trend of housing growth growing independently of population. Per capita income is \$26,597 and median household income is \$47,141 per year in the Superior Coastal Plain counties.

Economic Sectors

Government, tourism, health care, and retail are the largest sectors of employment within the counties of the SCP. The transportation and warehousing sector plays a larger role in employment within the SCP counties than they do in the rest of the Wisconsin due to the influence of the Lake Superior ports. The tourism sector is quite prevalent in Bayfield County. Some agriculture occurs within this Superior Coastal Plain; including the growing of specialty crops such as cherries and apples.

Land Use and Ownership

Of the approximately 900,000 acres of land that make up the Superior Coastal Plain, 191,000 acres, or 21% of all land and water is owned by the public. Of this, 43,400 acres are federal lands, 88,200 acres are county owned, and 49,700 are owned by the State of Wisconsin. Of the timberland in the region, 71% is owned privately, 3% is owned federally, and 26% is owned by state and local governments. The reservations of the Bad River and Red Cliff bands of Lake Superior Ojibwa are within the SCP and contain lands of high conservation value. Non-governmental organization projects and industrial forest lands also play important conservation roles.

Cultural Context

Historically, several tribes temporarily settled in the region. Today, only the Chippewa remain on the Superior Coastal Plain. The Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa make their home on the northern shores of the Bayfield Peninsula. The Bad River Band owns and maintains a reservation along the Lower Bad River in Ashland County. A portion of the southern border of these lands forms the northern edge of Copper Falls State Park (WDNR, 2015). The

department's properties in the Superior Coastal Plain are within the ceded territory of the Ojibwe Tribes. Native American tribes are independent, sovereign nations, as they were prior to the arrival of Europeans in North America. The Ojibwe Tribes ceded some lands in the northern one-third of Wisconsin to the United States Government in the Treaties of 1837 and 1842. In those treaties, they reserved their rights to hunt, trap, fish and gather within various publicly-owned lands. Treaty rights are currently being exercised and implemented.

Post-Euro-American settlement, the Superior Coastal Plain has played a large role in timber production and transportation of products to and from Wisconsin. Agriculture and mining have not historically played major roles in the Superior Coastal Plain. Today, the Superior Coastal Plain is largely rural, with only Douglas County being classified as metropolitan. The counties have economies that are classified as non-specialized by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (WDNR, 2015b).

OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE SUPERIOR COASTAL PLAIN

The Superior Coastal Plain ecological landscape hosts an abundance of outdoor recreation activities. It is a popular destination for people from around Wisconsin and the Midwest. Large tracts of conservation lands open to public recreational use offer excellent scenery and both accessible and remote settings and draw visitors from outside the region. Many tourists visit to see the thundering waters of Amnicon Falls, Pattison Falls, and Copper Falls State Parks. Others to try their luck at landing a trophy smallmouth bass in Chequamegon Bay or paddle the sea caves of the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore.

The recreational activities focused on in this planning process and presented in this section are nature-based and motorized activities that generally take place in natural or undeveloped settings. The information summarized in this section and gathered during the public input process will be used to determine how DNR properties, in conjunction with other public lands, can best meet the region's recreation needs. The department's master planning team must consider the purpose of the property and its natural resources when developing the objectives and prescriptions that shape the recreation components of the master plan.

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN THE SUPERIOR COASTAL PLAIN

The following summarizes outdoor recreational activities that occur on department properties in the Superior Coastal Plain. The information for these summaries is sourced from several documents, including:

- Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin: an assessment of ecological resources and a guide to planning sustainable management (WDNR, 2015b)
- Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) (WDNR, 2018a)
- Wisconsin Land Legacy Report (Pohlman, Bartlett, Hanson III, Scott, & Thompson, 2006)
- Recreation Opportunity Analysis (ROA) for Great Northwest Region (WDNR, 2018d)
- Numerous DNR webpages

The regional master planning process is organized around the natural boundaries of ecological landscapes. However, the data and information sources used in examining the recreational resources often utilize political boundaries. The SCORP reports data for the entirety of Wisconsin. The recreation opportunity analysis for the Great Northwest region includes information for the counties of Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Polk, Rusk, and Sawyer. The Superior Coastal Plain consists of portions of Ashland, Bayfield, and Burnett counties with a very small portion of the SCP falling in Iron County (see landscape map). To the extent possible, this section addresses recreation opportunity in the Superior Coastal Plain ecological landscape. When information is referring to a larger region that contains the SCP, it is noted as such.

To examine the recreational opportunities and challenges present in the SCP, this section is organized by category of activity.

Water-based Activities

Fishing

The Superior Coastal Plain is a major draw for anglers due to its diversity of water types. Lake Superior provides big-water fishing opportunities for anglers pursuing cold-water species such as Lake Trout and Whitefish in the open water. Chequamegon Bay hosts a world-class fishery for warmer water species, including smallmouth bass. The



Cranberry, Onion, and White Rivers, as well as numerous tributaries and other rivers are popular locations to pursue trout.

The department offers access through improved boat launches on many of its properties, and shore fishing is allowed on all department lands. Most other public lands in the region offer access to shore fishing.

Canoeing/Kayaking

The SCP ecological landscape is an excellent destination for paddling sports. Its many winding rivers offer quality paddling experiences for any skill level. The landscape boasts several waterbodies designated as Outstanding and Exceptional Resource Waters. These uncommon waters have received state designation because they support valuable fisheries and wildlife habitat, provide outstanding recreational opportunities, have not been adversely impacted by human activities, and are the highest quality waters in Wisconsin. Many department properties have canoe/kayak launches and several offer campsites that can only be accessed by paddling. Canoes and kayaks can be carried into waters from any department property, not just those with improved boat launches.

Motorboating

The relatively few inland lakes in this region compared to the rest of Wisconsin limits motorboating activities such as tubing and water skiing. Lake Superior is popular for driving motorboats; however, skiing and tubing are less popular due to the cool water temperature. Bark Bay Slough Natural Area and Big Bay State Park facilitate motorboating.

Trail-based Activities

Hiking, walking, or running on trails

Hiking or walking is the most popular recreational activity undertaken in Wisconsin (SCORP). Opportunities for hiking in the SCP include state and national trails, hunter walking trails, and numerous trails within the state parks. The North Country National Scenic Trail cuts through this region as part of its more than 4,000-mile journey from North Dakota's Lake Sakakawea State Park to Crown Point, New York and offers opportunities for day hiking trips or longer backpacking expeditions (DNR North Country Trail web site). Other hiking areas offer many opportunities for short trips.

All DNR lands, and most other public lands in the region, are open to hikers. However, the level of development of trails, if they exist, varies dramatically across properties.

Bicycling

Bicycling in the SCP is a diverse activity that encompasses road cycling, mountain/fat tire biking, and off-road trail riding. There are many bicycling opportunities both on and off department properties in the SCP. All roads, except major highways, are open to bicycling and road cyclists readily take advantage of this opportunity. Off-road and mountain biking facilities exist at Copper Falls State Park. Over 300 miles of bike trail network exists adjacent to the SCP within the Chequamegon Area Mountain Biking Association (CAMBA) trail system.

Horseback Riding

Horseback riding occurs on both public and private lands in the Superior Coastal Plain. Due to the skill and cost needed to be involved, this is a specialized sport. The Great Northwest is not among the areas in the state where this activity is most popular. Of the 7% of respondents to the SCORP survey that indicated they participate in horseback riding, 55% indicated they do so 1-2 times per year.

The Brule River State Forest and Douglas County Forests offer horseback riding opportunities on designated trails. All department managed roads are open to horseback riding, and some township and County roads may also be open to horseback riding.

Cross-country skiing

The SCP receives an average of 87.4 inches of snow annually, making it a destination for cross-country skiers. Residents of the Great Northwest region participate in cross-country skiing at a higher rate than other regions of the state. Cross-country skiing can be done across all department properties, though most participants prefer groomed trails.

Motorized trail activities

Motorized trail-based recreation covers four similar, but distinct activities: snowmobiling, ATV/UTV riding, four-wheel drive vehicle driving, and off-highway motorcycle riding. There are two types of motorized access to department lands for these activities: access for street legal vehicles on roads maintained for public use; and trails and routes for motorized vehicles. Snowmobiles are somewhat unique in their seasonal nature and in that local and regional clubs maintain large networks of snowmobile trails that cross private lands. These regional trail networks usually use department lands primarily as connectors between long trail segments.

The Great Northwest region has the most existing opportunity for ATV/UTV riding compared to other recreational regions. However, there is little opportunity to expand these beyond opportunities, especially in the SCP ecological landscape. A small connecting segment of a motorized recreation trail currently crosses a portion of Amnicon Falls State Park, but there is limited opportunity to expand. Non-DNR lands or lands not included in this planning process also provide motorized trail recreational opportunities. Bayfield and Douglas County Forests offer 152 miles of ATV trails combined. ATVs are allowed on many town roads and street legal dual-sport motorcycles and 4WD vehicles are allowed on all department roads as well.

Non-Trail Activities that Take Place on Department Properties

Gathering Wild Edibles

Many Wisconsinites gather wild nuts, berries, plants, and mushrooms on public and private lands. In the SCORP survey, 37% of respondents indicated they gather wild edibles at some point during the year. All department properties are open to this activity.

Hunting and Trapping

Hunting and trapping are among Wisconsin's most cherished traditions and most department properties are open to hunting, except for designated areas closed to hunting for all or part of the year. Given the large amount of public land, there is a large amount of hunting opportunity in the NWS. Many hunter walking trails exist on department properties.

The department has launched "R3" efforts to bring additional hunters into the activity. R3 means recruitment, retention and reactivation of hunters, anglers and shooting sports participants. R3 is not a series of events or one-time activities meant to promote the sports of hunting and fishing, but rather a need to continuously engage with and provide participants the opportunity to have high quality experiences while hunting and fishing. Property master planning can serve as a key feature in R3 efforts by creating a plan that enables the high-quality experiences of hunters and anglers that keep participants in the sports. The Great Northwest ROA notes that this is important in the Superior Coastal Plain region (WDNR, 2018).

Wildlife Viewing, Outdoor Education and Interpretation

The Superior Coastal Plain's scenic beauty and abundant wildlife create excellent opportunities for wildlife viewing, nature photography, and outdoor education. The Bayfield Peninsula offers tremendous views of Lake Superior throughout the year. The Apostle Islands and the nationally designated lakeshore that shares their name offer a unique island perspective for these activities. The numerous natural areas within the EL provide visitors with the chance to view and learn about rare ecosystems. The concentrations of migrating birds, especially waterfowl, on and near Lake Superior provides a stimulating wildlife watching experience for even the most amateur of birders.

Outdoor education and nature photography are facilitated by many DNR partners (National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service among others) in the area. The Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center is a popular place for visitors and locals alike to learn about the ecology and history of the region. Most DNR properties within the SCP offer educational activities.

Rock Climbing

Rock climbing is a specialized sport that is more predominant in the southern portion of Wisconsin than the Superior Coastal Plain.

Target Shooting – Archery and Firearms

Target shooting by archery or firearm is a popular activity in the Great Northwest ROA region, with survey respondents indicating they take part in the activity at rates higher than the state average. The ROA identified firearms target shooting as a medium future need and archery as a low future need. These activities are accommodated on non-department public and private lands in the region.

Camping

Camping takes place in a variety of settings in the Superior Coastal Plain, from primitive sites with few accommodations outside of a fire ring and accessible only by hiking; to well-developed accessible sites with electrical hookups. Camping is not allowed on every property in the SCP. The four state parks in the region offer the full range of camping opportunities.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT IN THE SUPERIOR COASTAL PLAIN

The following information summarizes ecological and recreation considerations for planning and management in the Superior Coastal Plain. This section is meant to be a summary of the type of information the department uses when making master planning decisions. Information is sourced from numerous documents, including:

- The Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin: an assessment of ecological resources and a guide to planning sustainable management (WDNR, 2015b)
- Rapid Ecological Assessments (for specific landscapes or property groups; (O'Connor, Staffen, Staffen, & Doyle, 2018)
- Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan (WDNR, 2015a)
- Terrestrial and Wetland Habitat Priorities
- Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) (WDNR, 2018a)
- Recreation Opportunity Analysis (ROA) for the Great Northwest Recreational Region (WDNR, 2018d)

The master planning process accounts for both ecological and recreation considerations. Though the two may seem distinct, they are intertwined: outdoor recreation opportunities are shaped by the ecological characteristics of a property. Thus, the ecological information presented here also influences recreation planning on DNR properties.

ECOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS – LANDSCAPE LEVEL

The planning analysis revealed the following significant management opportunities for DNR properties within the Superior Coastal Plain:

- * Lake Superior Coastal habitats
- * Apostle Islands
- * Freshwater river estuaries (St. Louis, Bad/Kakagon, Big Bay, Port Wing, Bark, Raspberry)
- * River corridors, including cliffs, ledges, & falls
- * Red Clay Wetlands
- * Boreal Forests
- * Migratory Bird Concentration Areas

Natural Communities and Priority Habitats on DNR managed properties

Natural communities and priority habitats are the bedrock ecological considerations for master planning. These define the other ecological resources that may be present on a property. In seeking to maximize habitat and wildlife benefits within the constraints of fiscal resources available, DNR created a list of priority habitats. The top-rated priority habitats for northern Wisconsin are listed in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2. DNR Northern Wisconsin Priority Habitats

Terrestrial/Wetland	Aquatic
Deep marsh/shallow lakes (only those with wild rice opportunity)	Coldwater Streams
Great lakes dunes, wetlands, and shores	Large Lake – deep, soft, and very soft, seepage
Oak/pine barrens	Large Lake – deep, soft, drainage
Old Forests (natural origin pine, hemlock, cedar, northern hardwoods)	Large Lake – shallow, soft, drainage
Young forests	Lake Superior
	Spring Pond, lake – spring
	Springs and Spring Runs (hard)
	Springs and Spring Runs (soft)

The natural communities that are present on a property influence its habitat types and often include more detailed land cover descriptions than those used in habitat types. The Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan (WDNR, 2015a) and the Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin (WDNR, 2015b) identify the following 32 natural communities for which there are “Major” or “Important” opportunities for protection, restoration, or management on DNR-managed properties in the Superior Coastal Plain Ecological Landscape:

- Alder Thicket
- Aspen-Birch Forest
- Bedrock Shore
- Black Spruce Swamp
- Boreal Forest
- Clay Seepage Bluff
- Coldwater streams
- Coolwater streams
- Dry Cliff
- Emergent Marsh
- Floating-leaved Marsh
- Floodplain Forest
- Great Lakes Beach
- Great Lakes Dune
- Interdunal Wetland
- Lake Superior
- Mesic Floodplain Terrace
- Moist Cliff
- Muskeg
- Northern Dry Forest
- Northern Dry-Mesic Forest
- Northern Hardwood Swamp
- Northern Mesic Forest
- Northern Sedge Meadow
- Northern Sedge Meadow
- Northern Tamarack Swamp
- Northern Wet Forest
- Poor Fen
- Riverine Mud Flat
- Shore Fen
- Shrub-carr
- Submergent Marsh
- Warmwater river

Species-Specific Considerations – Landscape Level

Specific plant and animal species that inhabit the priority habitats and natural communities of the Superior Coastal Plain were also considered in the planning process.

Game Species

The Superior Coastal Plain provides good opportunities for hunting, trapping, and fishing. Species such as white-tailed deer, American black bear, American beaver, North American river otter, fisher, bobcat, ruffed grouse, American woodcock, Canada goose, mallard, wood duck, and ring-necked duck are all important game species.

Lake Superior supports an important sport fishery for lake trout, coho salmon, lake whitefish, brown trout, lake herring, and rainbow smelt. Walleye, smallmouth bass, northern pike and yellow perch are popular pursuits in the shallower bays such as Chequamegon Bay. Chequamegon Bay has a national reputation as a trophy smallmouth bass fishery, which supports a small charter/guide industry. Tributaries to Lake Superior are spawning areas for introduced nonnative salmonid species such as rainbow trout, brown trout and coho salmon; all popular with anglers, especially during spawning runs. Upper reaches and headwaters of some streams contain native brook trout, also popular with anglers.

Game species management is described on the department web page at dnr.wi.gov, keyword: game species.

Bird Species - Resident and Migratory

The Lake Superior shoreline is an important nesting and migratory corridor for millions of birds, including hawks, water birds, and passerines. Raptors and passerines use the shoreline as a landmark and as feeding and resting places during migration. Waterfowl are common along the Lake Superior shoreline especially during migration. In winter, species that inhabit the northerly areas of Canada and Alaska sometimes visit, including the great gray owl, northern hawk owl, boreal owl and gyrfalcon. Snowy owls winter regularly.

The merlin, often associated with boreal forest, is most abundant in this part of Wisconsin. The coniferous and mixed forests, abundant prey base, and extensive Lake Superior shoreline make this landscape an important breeding area for them. Ten Important Bird Areas are designated within or partially within this Ecological Landscape (Steele, 2007).

Considering Species of Greatest Conservation Need

The Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan identifies ecological priorities within each Ecological Landscape. Priorities represent the natural communities in each Ecological Landscape that are most important to Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). This concept is represented by the highlighted “priorities” section shown in the center of Figure 3.1. SGCN are native wildlife species with low or declining populations that are most at risk of no longer being a viable part of Wisconsin’s fauna. The center “priorities” can also be used to determine which natural communities provide the most habitat for SGCN and rare plants (Figure 3.2). For detailed information specific to the Superior Coastal Plain Ecological Landscape and these properties, including lists of species and the habitats with which they are associated, please see the Wildlife Action Plan and the appendices in the property-specific and landscape-specific Rapid Ecological Assessments (O'Connor, Staffen, Staffen, & Doyle, 2018)

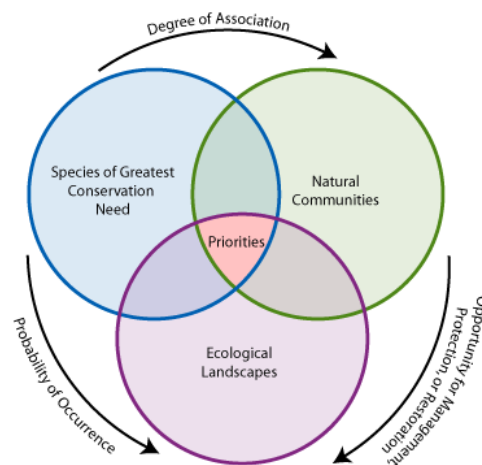


Figure 3.1. Illustration of the process used to identify Ecological Priorities in the Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan.

Rare Animals

Wisconsin's Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) Working List includes those species listed either at the Federal and/or State level. As of November 2009, NHI documented 62 rare animal species within the Superior Coastal Plain Ecological Landscape including 3 mammals, 28 birds, 4 herptiles, 2 fishes, and 25 invertebrates. This includes one U.S. Endangered species, 5 Wisconsin Endangered species, 5 Wisconsin Threatened species, and 51 Wisconsin Special Concern species.

Moose

Moose were historically present in the Superior Coastal Plain ecological landscape. Today, they are occasionally observed as visitors from Minnesota or Michigan. A breeding population is no longer present in Wisconsin; moose are a USFWS candidate for the Endangered Species List. Historically, moose were found throughout the northern third of Wisconsin, most abundant in northwestern Wisconsin, then decimated by hunting and brain worm disease.

Rare Plants

The rare plant database of WDNR's Natural Heritage Inventory (WDNR, 2009) contains records for 81 vascular plant species occurring within the Superior Coastal Plain Ecological Landscape that are currently listed as Endangered (10), Threatened (18), or Special Concern (53) by the state of Wisconsin.

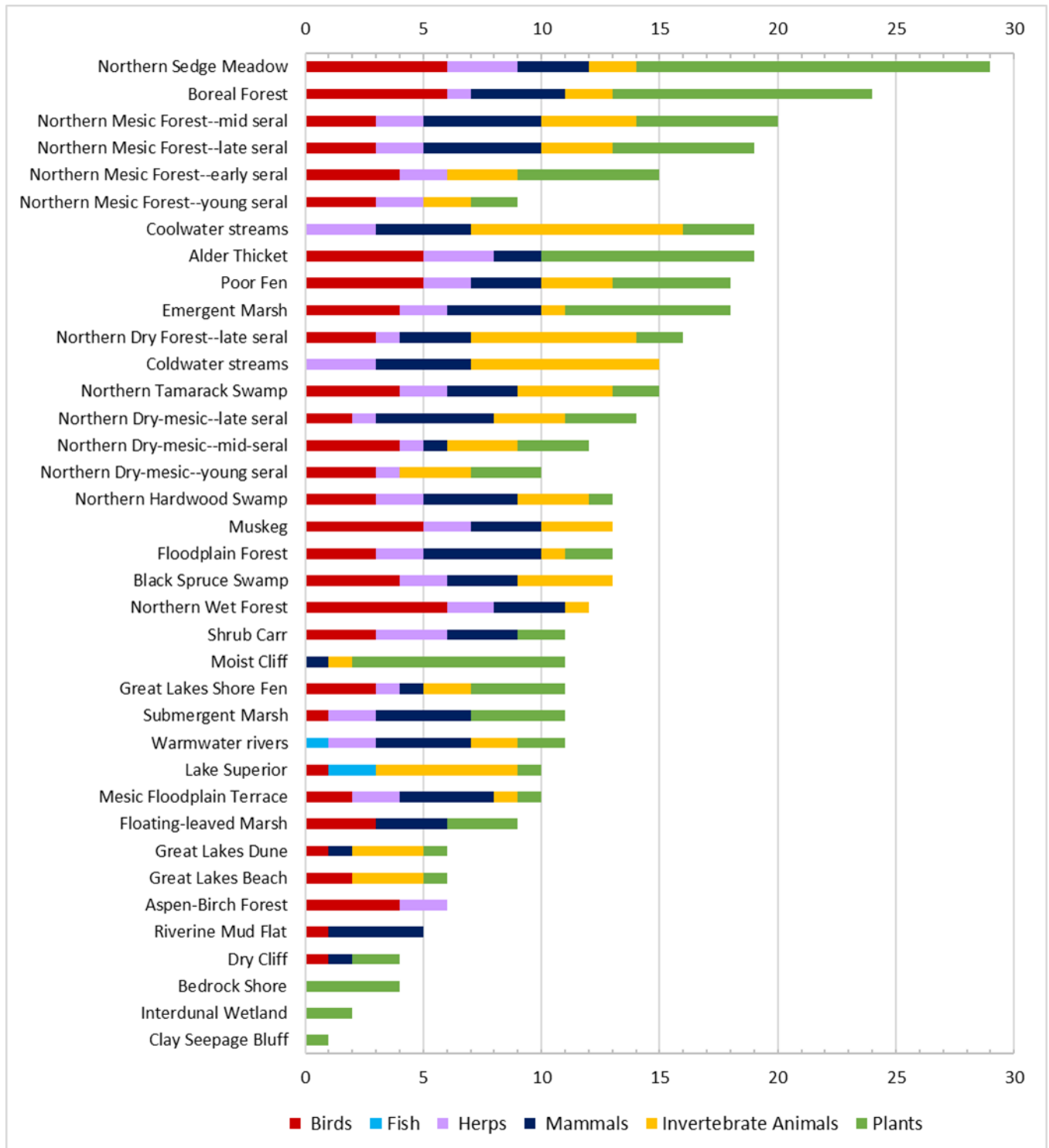


Figure 3.2. Number of SGCN and Rare Plants Highly or Moderately Associated with Natural Communities that have High or Moderate Opportunities for Protection, Restoration or Management in the Superior Coastal Plain Ecological Landscape. Teams of species and natural community experts and professionals assigned association scores to each species and natural community combination and opportunity scores to each natural community and ecological landscape combination. Each combination was ranked by team participants as high, moderate, low or none.

Ecologically Important Sites

Primary Sites: Site-specific Opportunities for Biodiversity Conservation

“Primary Sites” encompass the best examples of rare and representative natural communities and include documented rare species populations with opportunities for restoration or connections. They are identified during the Rapid Ecological Assessment (REA) process and included in REA reports, specifically prepared by the department for special consideration during the master planning process. Primary Sites warrant high protection and/or restoration. All Primary Sites can be considered High Conservation Value Forests for purposes of Forest Certification.

REAs also help summarize projects that collected biological inventory information about DNR properties. They document and help evaluate potential habitat for rare species and identify natural community management opportunities. These reports are accessible to the public via the department’s webpage.

ADDITIONAL REGIONAL & PROPERTY ATTRIBUTES

Additional properties and features identified in large-scale research and planning efforts are listed in this section.

Land Legacy Report

The Land Legacy Report (WDNR 2006b) was designed to identify Wisconsin’s most important conservation and recreation needs for the next 50 years. The following “Legacy Places” received the highest ranking (5 stars), implying that if restoration efforts are needed for the area, conservation actions would have a high likelihood of long-term success.

- Bois Brule River
- Apostle Islands
- Chequamegon Point/Kakagon Slough
- Western Lake Superior Drowned River Mouths (Port Wing, Bark Bay, Lost Creek, Raspberry Bay, Fish Creek)

Additional places identified for “excellent and very good ecological qualities with very good chances of restoration success”:

- Bad River
- Lake Superior South Shore Streams
- Montreal River
- Nemadji River and Wetlands
- St. Louis Estuary and Pokegama Wetlands
- White River
- Big Bay (area within state park, Madeline Is)

Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan: Conservation Opportunity Areas

The Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan (WDNR 2015) identifies Conservation Opportunity Areas (COA) in Wisconsin that contain ecological features, natural communities, and/or Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) habitat for which Wisconsin has a unique responsibility for protecting, when viewed from the global, continental, upper Midwest, or state perspective. (see COA map). The COAs in this landscape include:

- Apostle Islands COA



- Bad River COA
- Bibon Swamp COA
- Brule Boreal Forest COA
- Coastal Headlands and Estuaries COA
- Fish Lake COA
- St. Louis Estuary COA
- Bad River COA
- White River COA
- Gogebic-Penokee Ranges COA

Important Bird Area

Ten Important Bird Areas (IBA; WDNR 2007) in this landscape are critical sites for the conservation and management of Wisconsin's birds. Three of them are within properties of this (2018) Superior Coastal Plain master plan update:

- South Shore Fish & Wildlife Areas – habitat for breeding birds and migratory bird stopover site.
- South Shore Wetlands – (Port Wing, Bark Bay & others) habitat for breeding birds, including wetland birds, and a significant raptor migration route.

Outstanding and Exceptional Resource Waters (ORW and ERW)

These officially designated waters (ch. NR 102.11 Wis. Admin. Code) provide outstanding recreational opportunities, support valuable fish and wildlife habitat, have good water quality, are not significantly impacted by human activities, and are recognized as being the highest quality waters in the state. ORWs comprise less than 1% of over 15,000 rivers, lakes, and waterbodies in WI; they typically do not have any point sources discharging pollutants directly to the water (for instance, no industrial sources or municipal sewage treatment plants) and no increases of pollutant levels are allowed. If a waterbody has existing point sources at the time of designation, it is more likely to be designated as an ERW. Examples include:

ORW

- Amnicon River (Amnicon Falls State Park)
- Bad River (Copper Falls State Park)
- Tyler Forks (Copper Falls State Park)
- Flag River, Fish Creek, Sioux River, Fourmile Creek, North Pikes Creek, Iron River, Cranberry River (South Shore Lake Superior Fish & Wildlife Area)
- Bark River (Bark Bay Slough SNA)
- White River (White River Fishery Area)

ERW

- Copper Creek Tributary (Pattison State Park)
- Red River (St Louis River Streambank Protection Area)



- White River (Bibon Swamp; White River Wildlife Area)

Wetland Gem Designation

The Wisconsin Wetlands Association identifies 12 high-quality sites in the Superior Coastal Plain as "Wetland Gems" in its publication, Wisconsin Wetland Gems (Wisconsin Wetland Association, 2018). The 'gems' on DNR properties are:

- St. Louis River Estuary Marshes - extensive marshes with other wetland habitats that support many native plants, breeding and migratory birds, and serve as nursery for numerous native fish species.
- Pokegama Carnegie Wetlands - the state's most expansive and intact example of red clay flat wetlands, which occur only in the area of Superior, Wisconsin. This alder thicket, sedge meadow and marsh on slightly undulating clay soils supports great floristic diversity, with numerous and sizable populations of rare plants.
- Bibon Swamp - a diversity of natural communities with numerous rare species.
- Bark Bay & Lost Creek Bog
- Big Bay
- Nemadji Floodplain Forest

Priority Navigable Waterways

Priority Navigable Waterways (PNWs) are a broad category of officially designated lakes and streams that includes ORWs and ERWs and Areas of Special Natural Resource Interest (ASNRI), and waterways that sustain breeding populations of trout, walleye, musky, or sturgeon. The SCP has one PNW:

- St. Louis River (including the area adjacent to St. Louis and Red Rivers Streambank Protection Area and the area surrounding Clough Island) is a PNW Musky Area and PNW Sturgeon Area.

Wisconsin's Impaired Waters (303d)

Section 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act requires states to develop a list of impaired waters. The identification and listing of waters as impaired is part of waterbody classification, assessment, and management. The goal for all 303(d) waters is to protect, restore, and maintain the full potential of the waterbody to the maximum extent possible. The St. Louis River is an Area of Concern (AOC) that is listed for contaminated sediment (DDT and Dieldrin), contaminated fish tissue (mercury and PCBs), and chronic aquatic toxicity (PAHs and unspecified metals). A Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) has been developed for mercury.

RECREATION CONSIDERATIONS

Outdoor recreation in the Superior Coastal Plain is diverse. From camping and hiking to ATV riding and hunting, residents and visitors take part in a wide variety of activities in the Superior Coastal Plain. Extensive investigation into the recreation needs and opportunities of the public are recorded in the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) and Recreation Opportunity Analysis (ROA). The information from the SCORP and ROA used in the planning for the Superior Coastal Plain is noted in the Recreation Resources and Opportunities of the Superior Coastal Plain section of this plan.

Additional Public Conservation Lands in the Superior Coastal Plain

While this planning process is solely for Wisconsin DNR owned properties, to properly examine the true scope of recreation activities in the Superior Coastal Plain, department lands must be considered in the context of

recreational opportunity on other public lands. Thus, this planning effort will consider available opportunity on lands open to the public that are not owned by DNR when addressing recreational challenges and opportunities in the Superior Coastal Plain. Prominent public conservation lands, outside this planning effort, help serve the public's recreational needs and include:

State Trails in the Superior Coastal Plain Ecological Landscape

The following state trails are managed for public recreational uses by their respective counties of origin, through a partnership agreement with the DNR Parks and Recreation program.

- Gandy Dancer State Trail - Douglas, Burnett, & Polk counties
- Wild Rivers State Trail - Douglas, Washburn, & Barron counties
- Saunders State Trail - Douglas County

The North Country National Scenic Trail is both a National Scenic Trail and a State Trail. It is managed by the National Park Service, through partnership with DNR, county and local governments and the North Country Trail Association.

Water Trails in the Superior Coastal Plain Ecological Landscape

Water trails provide a network of access points, resting places and attractions for users of water craft on lakes and rivers.

- Lake Superior State Water Trail: Planned by Northwest Regional Plan Commission
- Minnesota St. Louis River State Water Trail: Planned by State of Minnesota
- St. Louis River Estuary National Water Trail: Planned in partnership with the State of Minnesota

County/Municipal Properties in the Superior Coastal Plain Ecological Landscape

County-owned lands in the SCP Ecological Landscape (> 88,000 acres) provide significant opportunities for public recreation that are complementary to state-owned (DNR) lands (WDNR 2015). Prominent examples of these public resources include:

- Bayfield County Forestry & Parks
- Douglas County Forestry, Parks & Recreation
- Superior Municipal Forest
- Ashland County Forestry & Recreation
- Wrenshall Grade Recreational Trail

Tribal Properties in the Superior Coastal Plain Ecological Landscape

The Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa and Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa are located in the Superior Coastal Plain region. In 2012, the Red Cliff Band created the first tribal national park in the United States. Frog Bay Tribal National Park is a 300-acre conservation area located on the shores of Lake Superior. 170 acres of this area is open to the public for on-trail hiking to the park's over 4,000 feet of shoreline.

The park includes sandy beaches, old-growth Boreal Forest, and a high-quality coastal estuary that provides critical habitat for many native species. Five Apostle Islands are visible from the park. The Red Cliff Band also provides public camping and hiking opportunities at other properties it manages in the region (Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, 2018).

Federal Properties in the Superior Coastal Plain Ecological Landscape



Federal forest and park lands in the SCP (>43,000 ac) offer significant opportunities for public recreation. These properties include:

- North Country National Scenic Trail
- Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest
- Apostle Islands National Lakeshore - 42,308 acres across 21 Islands and 12 miles of Bayfield Co mainland
- Whittlesey Creek National Wildlife Refuge - 300 acres

Chapter 4: Analysis of Impacts

IMPACTS FROM PROPOSED MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

INTRODUCTION

This analysis discloses the positive and negative environmental impacts of the management actions recommended in this master plan to decision-makers and the public. The focus is primarily on new uses or management proposed in the plan. The proposed management for the properties of the Superior Coastal Plain region in this master plan is anticipated to have many net beneficial environmental effects and is not anticipated to cause significant adverse environmental impacts.

IMPACTS TO NATURAL RESOURCES

Soils

Impacts to soils resulting from the management actions in this plan are expected to be minimal. Construction activities related to development of new parking areas, logging access or water access points has the most potential to cause erosion. However, action on any of these activities will be minimal for the properties in this master plan. Construction best management practices (BMPs), as required in department guidelines, will limit the potential for erosion. Other management will continue to encourage native vegetative cover which may enhance soil health and may reduce erosion potential.

Soil erosion during timber harvesting operations on department properties will be minimized by the use of BMPs for water quality guidelines. BMPs contain strict standards for road construction, water crossings, skid trails and logging landings. All trails and primitive roads are monitored for signs of excessive soil erosion caused by management activities or recreational use. Actions may be taken to minimize the erosion potential.

This plan also calls for management meant to reduce the peak flows of stormwater and snowmelt runoff on many of the properties. This management is also meant to reduce the amount of soil erosion occurring in the region, a large portion of which is made up of highly erodible soils. Thus, it is anticipated this plan will have a positive effect on soils of the region.

Geological Resources and Landforms

One of the functions of this plan is to protect important geological resources, such as the Douglas Fault and the gorges and waterfalls that typify this region. The actions proposed in this plan will not have a detrimental effect on these resources and will serve to further protect many of the most iconic landforms.

Air Quality

Potential impacts to air quality are anticipated to come primarily from prescribed burns. Prescribed burns may occur seasonally (typically spring and fall). Burn plans are developed before prescribed burns are used on department properties and contain best management practices and procedures to safely manage the fire, including measures to minimize nuisance smoke. Local landowners and units of government will be notified prior to prescribed burns.

Vehicle emissions generated by motor vehicles and motorized equipment used in management activities, such as timber harvesting, will be minimal. Vehicle emissions from management activities are anticipated to be less than

that from traffic on adjacent roadways. Similarly, vehicle emissions from any increased in visitation to the state parks of the region is anticipated to be negligible.

Water Resources

Sanitary Systems and Vault Toilets

Existing and new sanitary systems will be maintained or constructed to meet all applicable building codes. No adverse impacts from sanitary systems on the properties in this plan are anticipated.

Water Quality of Surface Waters and Wetlands

Maintaining permanent vegetative cover and the application of BMPs during management activities will have an overall positive impact on both surface waters and wetlands. The impacts of stormwater runoff during timber harvesting will be mitigated by implementing appropriate best management practices. These practices are described in the “Wisconsin’s Forestry Best Management Practices for Water Quality” field manual and are part of every timber harvest in the region. Management specifically tailored to reducing runoff in the red clay soils typical of the Superior Coastal Plain will also be implemented.

Impervious surface, which has the effect of preventing infiltration and increasing water runoff, will be kept to a minimum. The state parks of the region will have the more impervious surface than other, less intensively visited properties. Pervious road and pathway surfaces may be used where impervious surfaces are not needed. Runoff from roadways and other impervious surfaces will generally be buffered to avoid direct drainage into nearby streams and lakes and minimize water pollution risks.

Vegetation

The vegetation management strategies in this master plan are intended to maintain or improve the quality of native and restored habitats. Examples of primary vegetation objectives for properties this plan include maintaining mixed-species deciduous and native conifer forests, maintaining and enhancing Boreal Forest and other natural community forest types, managing forests to encourage asynchronous snowmelt and reduce peak flow in streams, and enhancing the natural character and aesthetics of heavily used recreational areas.

Most of the planned changes to the composition and structure of habitats or communities will occur slowly over the next 50 years, minimizing short-term impacts. Most habitat conversion will be heavily governed by natural succession processes, further minimizing impacts. DNR policies addressing the monitoring, inspection and control of invasive species will be followed. Control measures may include mechanical control, use of herbicides, and fire. Active management of any vegetation will follow established department practices. Descriptions of these practices can be found in the Common Elements for Habitats and their Management found on the DNR Property Planning website.

Wildlife and Fisheries

The actions proposed in this master plan will have positive impacts on resident and migratory wildlife. The habitat management activities will enhance the quality and extent of habitat for wildlife, particularly those that favor Boreal Forests and older forests. Boreal Forests occur in few other ecological landscapes in Wisconsin. The Lake Superior coastal estuaries and their associated natural communities are also important to wildlife and this plan seeks to enhance these.

The waterways of the region, particularly Lake Superior tributaries, many of which seasonally host lake-run salmonids are maintained and enhanced by this plan. The Lake Superior fishery is further enhanced by the presence of a state fish hatchery, which raises and releases several salmonid species into the lake’s tributaries. The

management objectives and prescriptions outlined in Chapter Two will create or maintain the diverse forest, wetland, shrub, and aquatic habitats needed by the game and non-game wildlife and fish populations found on Superior Coastal Plain properties.

Endangered, Threatened and Rare Species, Native Communities and Scarce Ecological Resources

The proposed management objectives and prescriptions are expected to cause few, if any, negative impacts to endangered, threatened and rare species while yielding significant medium to long-term benefits. Protection, maintenance, or enhancement of the important native communities and unique habitats on the Superior Coastal Plain properties will continue to provide benefits to a wide range of rare, threatened or endangered resident and migratory species. This is especially true on eight existing (five standalone and three embedded on other properties) and two proposed State Natural Areas. These areas protect and perpetuate some of the best examples of Wisconsin's natural communities, including rare species. The management in this plan furthers these protections.

Visual/Scenic Resources

Within the region's state parks, management is anticipated to maintain and enhance the already high aesthetic values quality and natural character of the properties. In areas managed for older forest, small changes in the visual qualities and aesthetics of the plant communities will occur over time as the forest matures and develops stronger older forest characteristics, such as larger diameter trees and dead and down trees. Other areas will be managed for mixed-age forests and will have a different, but not lesser quality, aesthetic than the old forest areas. Larger trees will be especially prevalent in higher use areas.

The visual quality of non-park properties would, over time, be maintained or enhanced over time as a result of the proposed management. When forest and other management activities occur on or near high use recreational properties or areas the visibility of management activity will be present in the short-term but will be minimized by conducting management whenever possible during lower public use times. Even so, at times there may be temporary disruptions of recreational activities and visual quality of the areas by management actions such as prescribed burns and forest management activities such as timber harvests.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS

Timber Products

Timber production, as part of sustainable forest management, is an important management tool for meeting plan objectives, but it is a secondary purpose of the properties on which it is authorized. While not a primary goal, timber production has value and provides multiple benefits, including employment in forest-based industries, revenues for property management, and habitat improvement. Commercial timber harvests will continue to be an integral part of management on select Superior Coastal Plain properties under this master plan.

Transportation

Traffic on public highways due to proposed management activities is not expected to change from the current, minimal, level. Traffic from any increased visitation to the popular state parks in the region will also be marginal in comparison to normal vehicular traffic in the region.

Noise

Noise impacts from management activities are anticipated to continue to be minimal on property neighbors and users. Most other noise impacts would be generated primarily from land management, forestry and construction and maintenance activities. Such noise will be generated by chainsaws, skidders, machinery, and trucks. These noises

will occur primarily during daylight hours and would be peak (high level, short duration) rather than continuous in nature. The noise often will be seasonal and transient (i.e., once the activity is completed the noise source will be eliminated).

Public Safety

Management of Superior Coastal Plain properties, as described in this plan, is anticipated to have minimal negative effects on public safety. Designated use areas, such as parking areas and trails, are inspected semi-annually to locate and remove hazardous trees and other potential impediments to public safety. Department safety procedures are followed when using herbicides, pesticides, fire, and in other property management activities.

Land Use

The proposed plan mostly continues overall conditions and management strategies that have been in place on the properties. Therefore, minimal impacts on land use are anticipated. Small changes may occur due to parking area or trail installation at several properties. The addition of any recreational facilities will be compatible with current land use.

Degree of Controversy

Little to no controversy is anticipated to result from effects on the quality of the human environment due to implementation of this plan. The human environment is expected to improve through enhancements to environmental quality and increased recreational options as this plan is implemented. Public interest in land use, particularly as it relates to recreational options on several department has been present, but it has generated little to no controversy.

ECONOMIC EFFECTS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

Implementation of the proposed plan would not specifically generate any significant economic impact. However, the state parks of the region are large tourist attractions and may generate revenues for local businesses that serve the tourism industry.

Forest management on the property contributes to the local logging industry. Timber harvests that occur will contribute to the local supply of wood products. These harvests will add to the local economy through cash to the landowners and wages for laborers in the field, and primary and secondary forest products industries.

Fiscal Effects on Local Government

This plan is not anticipated to generate any change in the fiscal effects on local government expenses or revenues. State law requires the department to make payments in lieu of property taxes (PILT) to ensure the affected town's property base is not adversely affected. There are two separate state statutes, and several formulas under each, that dictate the amount of these payments.

- Wisconsin Statute 70.113 applies to land acquired by the department prior to January 1, 1992. Payments under this statute are made directly to the taxation district in which the land is located.
- Wisconsin Statute 70.114 governs PILT for all lands purchased by the department after January 1, 1992. This law has been amended several times so the specific formula used to determine individual payments varies depending on when the property was acquired and how it was acquired.

The department uses an automated process for collecting information and calculating PILT payments. The process is determined by statute with little room for interpretation or calculation by the department. For further details,

please refer to the applicable state statutes or visit the department web site at <http://dnr.wi.gov/> and perform a search for “Payment in Lieu of Taxes”.

IMPACTS ON ENERGY CONSUMPTION

Due to the limited amount of infrastructure development and renovation proposed, no significant impacts to energy consumption are expected.

IMPACTS ON ENERGY CONSUMPTION

Due to the limited amount of infrastructure development and renovation proposed, no significant impacts to energy consumption are expected.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS, RISK AND PRECEDENT

SIGNIFICANCE OF CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Overall, the proposed actions are anticipated to have positive long-term effects on the quality of the natural environment and recreational users. Over time, management to protect and enhance natural communities, Lake Superior’s shoreline and tributaries, the region’s many waterfalls and cliffs, and other resources characteristic of the region will have positive effects on the region.

SIGNIFICANCE OF RISK

Management of the Superior Coastal Plain properties poses a low overall potential for risk to the environment. Proposed habitat management activities are similar to those used over the last several decades and these activities typically have less negative and more positive environmental impact than other land uses. Only a small percentage of the total Superior Coastal Plain land acreage will be actively managed (e.g., timber harvesting or prescribed burns) in any given year. No new, high-risk actions are proposed, nor are any actions which involve an irretrievable commitment of resources, or actions that could not be reversed in the future.

The presence of motor vehicles and other equipment during construction and logging may pose a slight but insignificant risk from spills and erosion. These risks would be mitigated by best management practice requirements and at preconstruction meetings with contractors.

SIGNIFICANCE OF PRECEDENT

Approval of this regional master plan will not substantially influence future decisions on other department property master plans. Properties listed in Table 1.1 as having NR 44-compliant plans are incorporated into this master plan. It is the department’s intent to plan all properties in a region concurrently, therefore, those plans incorporated into this plan will be placed on the same update cycle as this plan. This may delay future decisions on those properties, though the option for a plan variance or amendment under NR 44 will still exist of any necessary plan changes.

Implementation of the management actions contained in this master plan are not thought to be precedent-setting. Proposed land management, development, and recreational activities have largely been conducted on DNR properties in the past. All development of recreational or other facilities will follow existing department design guidelines.



ADDITIONAL IMPACTS

Additional, generalized, impacts from recreational activities and the development and maintenance of facilities associated with them can be found in the Recreation Facilities and their Management Common Elements. These documents can be accessed via the department's Property Planning website.

WEPA COMPLIANCE

Property Planning under NR 44 is an equivalent analysis action under 150.20(2) (a) 1 and therefore complies with the Wisconsin Environmental Policy Act §1.11 and NR 150.

Chapter 5: Analysis of Alternatives

This chapter describes the alternatives and anticipated impacts of alternatives *considered but not selected* during the development of this master plan.

LAND MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES

Overall land management for the Superior Coastal Plain master plan will remain largely unchanged. No new resource management objectives (alternative management purposes) were identified for consideration in the planning process.

During the planning process the planning team evaluated the assessment data and determined the most appropriate actions for protecting and perpetuating high-value resources and general habitats, and recreational environments. The proposed master plan maintains the overall current resource management focus on each property and adds enhancements to provide additional protection or enhancement of high-value natural resources that were identified in the resource assessment process. Thus, the planning team did not consider any significant land management alternatives.

PUBLIC USE ALTERNATIVES

MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL DEVELOPMENT AT NOURSE SUGARBUSH STATE NATURAL AREA

The department was asked to consider allowing use of mountain bikes on the Nourse Sugarbush State Natural Area. This state-owned property in Bayfield County contains a network of maintained cross-country ski trails. The department was asked to consider allowing mountain bike use on several of these trails. The ski trail network existed prior to the department's acquisition of the SNA, and its continued use was a condition of the property's sale to the state. The ski trails are maintained by the Ashwabay Outdoor Education Foundation staff, which owns land adjacent to the SNA.

The department considers authorizing recreational activities and facility development on state-owned lands when doing so is compatible with site-specific property management and protection goals. In evaluating this request, the department considered several factors including need for the recreational activity site capacity, existing uses, property designation and primary purpose of the property.

The subject property of the mountain bike trail proposal, Nourse Sugarbush, is a designated State Natural Area. SNAs are established to protect outstanding examples of Wisconsin's native landscape of ecological communities for research and educational use, the preservation of genetic and biological diversity and for providing benchmarks for determining the impact of use on managed lands. They also provide some of the last refuges for rare plants and animals. As such, the department places an increased level of scrutiny on proposed recreational activities within SNAs.

Wis. Stats. §23.28 provides authority to the department to prohibit and control use of designated State Natural Areas:

State Statute 23.28 (3) Protection of natural values; research natural areas. The department shall not permit any use of a designated state natural area which is inconsistent with or injurious to its natural values. The department may establish use zones, may control uses within a zone and may limit the number of persons using a zone in a designated state natural area.



After considering the potential for impacts to the property, including potential off-trail use, which can damage the unique understory cover, and introduction of invasive species, the planning team decided not to include the mountain bike trail proposal in the master plan. It is the department's position that a mountain bike trail system is inconsistent with protection of the natural values of the Nourse Sugarbush State Natural Area.

Chapter 6: Summary of Public Involvement Process and Input Received

Public input is welcome throughout the master planning process but is solicited by the planning team in two distinct processes. The first, during the plan's scoping phase, seeks public input regarding use of the properties of the region. This first public involvement phase helps the planning team understand the public's use of the properties and aids in setting the scope of the plan. The second process takes place following the department's release of the draft regional master plan. Both public input processes were guided by the Public Participation Plan for the Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan.

INITIAL PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

Following initiation of the planning process for the Superior Coastal Plain, public input was welcomed to aid in the scoping process. Public input regarding the planning of properties in the Superior Coastal Plain Ecological Landscape was open from March 27 – May 3, 2018. The purpose of the initial public involvement phase is to notify the public regarding the department's intent to plan for properties in the region and to identify management and use issues to be evaluated during the planning process.

Public input processes for the Northwest Sands and Northwest Lowlands regional master plans occurred concurrently with the Superior Coastal Plain. Two open houses were held for people to comment on properties in any of the three landscapes. The public meetings were held in two locations: the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center in Ashland and the DNR Service Center in Spooner. The public meetings were held April 24 and 25, 2018.

The public open houses were held for the three concurrent planning processes. The comments summarized in this section are those that relate to the Superior Coastal Plain. Additional comments received are included in Chapter 6 of the regional master plan they pertain to.

PUBLIC INPUT REGARDING THE SUPERIOR COASTAL PLAIN DRAFT REGIONAL MASTER PLAN

The Superior Coastal Plain Draft Regional Master Plan was released for public review on December 6, 2019. A press release was posted to the department website and distributed to media in Ashland, Bayfield, Douglas, Burnett, Washburn and surrounding counties. The news release was also sent to the email distribution list, which contains over 4,600 subscribers. The public meeting was advertised at the Spooner DNR Service Center and at the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center. Several local media outlets also ran stories regarding the opportunity to give public input.

The draft plan was posted to the Superior Coastal Plain master planning webpage. Individual sections of the plan were also available for download. The department provided an interactive map for the public to view the properties in the context of the ecological landscape, read a brief description of the plan, and access property-specific sections of the plan. The whole draft regional plan was downloaded a total of 83 times. Chapter Two, the chapter containing the property plans, was individually downloaded an additional 24 times.

Public meetings were held December 17 and 18, 2019 at the DNR Spooner Service Center and the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center in Ashland respectively. Six members of the public attended the Spooner meeting and 13 attended the Ashland meeting. A total of seven hard-copy public input forms were received between the two meetings. The online public input form garnered 10 responses.



Public input on the Superior Coastal Plain Draft Regional Master Plan was largely supportive of the proposed management. Major topics are briefly summarized here.

State Parks

Comments received were supportive of the proposed management of state parks. Commenters praised the addition of non-motorized trails to previously less-accessible portions of state parks. One commenter noted the need for accessibility to be a consideration in all department planning. The department considers accessibility as a key component of its standard designs.

Other commenters noted activities they would like to see more of in parks, such as trails groomed for skate skiing or classical skiing. These are decisions made by the Bureau of Parks and Recreation Management. Where appropriate, the proposed plan authorizes the changing of trail uses to meet shifting public needs.

Four Wheel Drive Vehicle Slow Speed Trails

Several requests were received through the online public input form for slow-speed four-wheel drive (4WD) vehicle trails. While developing the draft regional master plan, recreational options for each property were assessed. At this time, the department is not recommending four-wheel drive slow speed trails be included on the properties with management described in the Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan. Previously planned northern state forests do offer four-wheel driving experiences on forest roads open to public vehicle use.

North Country National Scenic Trail

The North Country National Scenic Trail crosses two state parks, the St. Louis River Streambank Protection Area, and several smaller properties, including those proposed to be named “State North Country Trail Areas.” The North Country Trail Association and several individuals submitted comments regarding the trail’s management and description in the plan. These comments focused on the trail’s description or requests for clarification. Several commenters suggested additional backpack camping opportunities. The management described in the proposed plan allows for the addition of backpack camping on most of the properties the North Country Trail crosses.

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Appendix A: Properties of the Superior Coastal Plain

Properties included in this Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan are under a variety of administrative property designations. Table A.1 lists all properties in this plan. Table A.1 also includes the NR 44-plan in which management for the property is written. All properties in Table A.1 will have NR 44-compliant plans and be included in subsequent updates of this Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan upon approval of this proposed plan.

Table A.1. Properties included in the Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan

		Maps in Property Planning Viewer				
Property	NR 44 Compliant Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation Infrastructure	DNR Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classifications
Amnicon Falls State Park	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Bad River State Habitat Area	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Bark Bay State Natural Area	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Bibon Swamp Natural Area	White River Property Group Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Big Bay State Park	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Black River State North Country Trail Area*	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification



Appendix A: Properties of the Superior Coastal Plain

		Maps in Property Planning Viewer				
Property	NR 44 Compliant Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation Infrastructure	DNR Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classifications
Clear Creek State North Country Trail Area*	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Copper Falls State North Country Trail Area*	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Copper Falls State Park	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Lost Creek Bog Natural Area	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Middle River Sea Lamprey Barrier State Habitat Area*	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Nemadji River State North Country Trail Area*	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Nourse Sugarbush State Natural Area	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification



Appendix A: Properties of the Superior Coastal Plain

		Maps in Property Planning Viewer				
Property	NR 44 Compliant Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation Infrastructure	DNR Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classifications
Oliver - St. Louis River State Public Access*	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Onion River State Public Access*	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Pageant Road State Public Access*	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Pattison State Park	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Pattison State Park North Country Trail Area*	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Pokegama-Carnegie Wetlands State Natural Area	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Port Wing Boreal Forest State Natural Area	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Potato River State Habitat Area*	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification



		Maps in Property Planning Viewer				
Property	NR 44 Compliant Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation Infrastructure	DNR Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classifications
Saxine Creek State Habitat Area*	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Schacte Creek State Habitat Area*	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Solon Springs State North Country Trail Area*	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area**	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area – Cranberry River Unit**	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area – Fish Creek Unit**	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification

Appendix A: Properties of the Superior Coastal Plain

		Maps in Property Planning Viewer				
Property	NR 44 Compliant Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation Infrastructure	DNR Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classifications
South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area – Flag River Unit**	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area – Iron River Unit**	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area – Pikes Creek Unit**	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area – Sioux River Unit**	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
St. Louis River State Habitat Area*	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	Property is a closed easement and is not available in the Property Planning Viewer.				
St. Louis River Stream Bank Protection Area	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification



Appendix A: Properties of the Superior Coastal Plain

		Maps in Property Planning Viewer				
Property	NR 44 Compliant Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation Infrastructure	DNR Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classifications
State Owned Islands - Bayfield County - Siskiwit Lake - Long Island*	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
State Owned Islands - Bayfield County - Siskiwit Lake - Round Island*	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
State Owned Islands - Bayfield County - Siskiwit Lake - Siskiwit Island*	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Town of Morse State Habitat Area*	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Town of Saxon State Habitat Area*	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan	DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification



			Maps in Property Planning Viewer				
Property	NR 44 Compliant Plan		DNR & Other Lands	Recreation Infrastructure	DNR Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classifications
White River Fishery Area-Bayfield	White River Property Group Master Plan	Headwaters	DNR & Other Lands	Existing Recreation	Existing Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
		Middle Segment	DNR & Other Lands	Existing Recreation	Existing Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
White River Wildlife Area-Ashland	White River Property Group Master Plan		DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification
Wisconsin Point Bird Sanctuary State Habitat Area*	Superior Coastal Plain Regional Master Plan		DNR & Other Lands	Recreation	Roads	Land Cover	Land Management Classification

*The proposed name for this property is shown in the Table A.1. Please see Table B.2 for the current property name.

**South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area is the proposed name for the current South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area. It is one property composed of six units. The units are shown separately in this table for convenience in locating each within the Property Planning Viewer.

Appendix B: Real Estate Action Item Tables

Table B.2. Overview of Real Estate Recommendations for the Superior Coastal Plain Ecological Landscape

Property Name (Acquisition Authority)	Fee Title Acres (Statewide)	Easement Acres (Statewide)	Existing Project Boundary (Acres)	Proposed Project Boundary (Acres)	Changes in Project Boundary (Acres)	Existing Acquisition Goal (Acres)	Proposed Acquisition Goal (Acres)	Changes in Acquisition Goal (Acres)	Percent Complete	Parcel Redesignations	Proposed Land Sale (Acres)
AMNICON FALLS STATE PARK	826.44	0.00	837.06	837.06	0.00	824.56	826.44	1.88	100%		
BAYFIELD PENINSULA	1.90	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	154.62	152.72	-1.90	1%	-1.90	
BIBON SWAMP NATURAL AREA(Proposed BIBON SWAMP STATE NATURAL AREA)	9,746.53	0.00	12,943.52	12,943.52	0.00	13,264.00	12,943.52	-320.48	73%	40.00	
BIG BAY STATE PARK	2,495.40	21.92	2,564.61	2,730.36	165.75	2,692.96	2,730.36	37.40	93%		
BRULE RIVER STATE FOREST	47,461.86	1.83	83,893.42	83,893.42	0.00	82,650.00	82,810.00	160.00	57%	160.00	
COPPER FALLS STATE PARK	3,539.33	3.40	4,058.67	4,222.59	163.92	3,880.00	4,222.59	342.59	91%		
LOST CREEK BOG NATURAL AREA (Proposed LOST CREEK BOG STATE NATURAL AREA)	859.87	3.34	915.26	915.26	0.00	715.00	915.26	200.26	120%		
NORTH COUNTRY NAT'L SCENIC TRAIL	752.62	114.30	44,047.64	44,047.64	0.00	2,050.00	2,050.00	0.00	37%		
NORTH FISH CREEK STREAM IMP	40.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00*	-40.00	>100%	-40.00	
PATTISON STATE PARK	1,521.19	0.00	1,695.41	1,721.79	26.38	1,600.00	1,713.46	113.46	95%		
REM-IRON RIVER	38.56	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00*	-38.56	>100%	-38.56	
SOUTH SHORE LAKE SUPERIOR FISH AND WILDLIFE AREA	8,139.45	69.25	15,914.30	0.00	-15,914.30	8,690.09	0.00	-8,690.09	94%	-8,208.70	
Proposed - SOUTH SHORE LAKE SUPERIOR FISHERY AREA	0.00	0.00	0.00	16,404.39	16,404.39	0.00	16,404.39	16,404.39	0%	8,339.10	3.04
ST. LOUIS RIVER STREAM BANK PROTECTION AREA (Proposed ST. LOUIS RIVER STREAMBANK PROTECTION AREA)	6,863.61	0.00	7,904.37	7,904.37	0.00	6,823.00	7,904.37	1,081.37	101%		
WHITE RIVER FISHERY AREA-BAYFIELD	4,356.60	87.13	10,473.23	10,503.63	30.40	10,126.00	10,126.00	0.00	43%		
WHITE RIVER WILDLIFE AREA-ASHLAND	1,279.36	2.67	1,627.94	1,627.94	0.00	1,628.00	1,628.00	0.00	79%		
GIFT LANDS	1,982.68	521.39	NA	NA	NA	4,483.73	4,203.33	-280.40	44%	-280.40	
SCATTERED FOREST LANDS	6,245.60	22.53	NA	NA	NA	5,352.11	4,378.11	-974.00	117%	-974.00	
SCATTERED WILDLIFE	8,990.23	2,410.18	NA	NA	NA	9,686.86	8,966.86	-720.00	93%	-720.00	
STATE OWNED ISLANDS	1,849.97	0.00	NA	NA	NA	1,180.99	1,180.99	0.00	157%		
STATEWIDE HABITAT AREAS	7,194.51	838.08	NA	NA	NA	8,976.12	8,658.12	-318.00	80%	-331.25	
STATEWIDE NATURAL AREA	29,393.52	5,911.54	NA	NA	NA	41,110.50	41,063.15	-47.35	71%	-83.15	
BARK BAY SLOUGH STATE NATURAL AREA (SNA Project Boundary)	NA	NA	1,216.96	1,230.22	13.26	NA	NA	NA	NA		
NEMADJI RIVER FLOODPLAIN FOREST STATE NATURAL AREA (SNA Project Boundary)	NA	NA	733.69	733.69	0.00	NA	NA	NA	NA		
NOURSE SUGARBUSH (SNA Project Boundary)	NA	NA	438.31	438.31	0.00	NA	NA	NA	NA		
POKEGAMA-CARNEGIE WETLANDS (SNA Project Boundary)	NA	NA	391.86	391.86	0.00	NA	NA	NA	NA		
PORT WING BOREAL FOREST (SNA Project Boundary)	NA	NA	254.52	254.52	0.00	NA	NA	NA	NA		
STATEWIDE PUBLIC ACCESS	1,188.98	34.58	NA	NA	NA	768.72	770.62	1.90	155%	1.90	
HABITAT AREA	18.07	0.00	NA	NA	NA	5,184.33	6,552.64	1,368.31	0%	2,136.96	

* The acquisition goal for this property will first be established to match the current Fee Title Ownership. The acquisition goal will then be transferred to another acquisition authority leaving the current acquisition authority's acquisition goal at 0 acres.

Table B.3. Scattered Department Property Naming Summary Table for the Superior Coastal Plain Region

Proposed Name	Existing Acquisition Authority/Name	Existing Administrative Owner	Proposed Administrative Owner	Proposed Redesignation (if Changed)	Acreage	County	Map Reference	Fee/Easement
Bad River State Habitat Area	Gift Lands	Other	Fish	State Habitat Area	35.55	Ashland	AC	Fee
Bibon Swamp Natural Area	Scattered Forest Lands	Wildlife	NHC	Bibon Swamp Natural Area	40.00	Bayfield	D	Fee
Black River State North Country Trail Area	North Country Nat'l Scenic Trail	Parks	Parks		199.95	Douglas	H-2	Fee
	North Country Nat'l Scenic Trail	Parks			0.05			Easement
Brule River State Forest	Gift Lands	Other	Forestry	Brule River State Forest	160.00	Douglas	AB	Fee
Clear Creek State North Country Trail Area	North Country Nat'l Scenic Trail	Parks	Parks		339.05	Douglas	AQ	Fee
Copper Falls State North Country Trail Area	North Country Nat'l Scenic Trail	Parks	Parks		44.75	Ashland	F-2	Fee
	North Country Nat'l Scenic Trail	Parks			15.66			Easement
Middle River Sea Lamprey Barrier State Habitat Area	Statewide Habitat Areas	Fish	Fish	State Habitat Area	12.85	Douglas	AH	Easement
Nemadji River State North Country Trail Area	North Country Nat'l Scenic Trail	Parks	Parks		102.38	Douglas	AQ	Fee
	North Country Nat'l Scenic Trail	Parks			65.00			Easement
Oliver - St. Louis River State Public Access	Statewide Public Access	Fish	Fish		4.14	Douglas	AL	Fee
	Statewide Public Access	Fish			0.32			Easement
Onion River State Public Access	Statewide Public Access	Fish	Fish		0.23	Bayfield	AM	Fee
Pageant Road State Public Access	Bayfield Peninsula	Other	Fish	Statewide Public Access	1.90	Bayfield	AA	Fee
Pattison State Park North Country Trail Area	North Country Nat'l Scenic Trail	Parks	Parks		40.00	Douglas	H-2	Fee
Potato River State Habitat Area	Gift Lands	Other	Fish	State Habitat Area	84.85	Ashland	AD	Fee
Saxine Creek State Habitat Area	Statewide Habitat Areas	Fish	Fish	State Habitat Area	268.00	Bayfield	AI	Fee
Schacte Creek State Habitat Area	REM-Iron River	Fish	Fish	State Habitat Area	38.56	Bayfield	AE	Fee
Solon Springs State North Country Trail Area	North Country Nat'l Scenic Trail	Parks	Parks		56.53	Douglas	AN	Fee
	North Country Nat'l Scenic Trail	Parks			19.29			Easement
South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area - Cranberry River Unit	Statewide Habitat Areas	Fish	Fish	South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area	50.00	Bayfield	I-2A	Fee
	Statewide Habitat Areas	Fish			0.40			Easement
	South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area	Fish & Wildlife			533.78			Fee
	South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area	Fish & Wildlife			29.75			Easement
South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area - Fish Creek Unit	South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area	Fish & Wildlife	Fish	South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area	1942.82	Bayfield	I-2B	Fee
	South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area	Fish & Wildlife			2.50			Easement
	North Fish Creek Stream IMP	Fish			40.00			Fee
South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area - Flag River Unit	South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area	Fish & Wildlife	Fish	South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area	1123.64	Bayfield	I-2C	Fee
	South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area	Fish & Wildlife			9.72			Easement
South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area - Iron River Unit	South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area	Fish & Wildlife	Fish	South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area	1044.95	Bayfield	I-2D	Fee
South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area - Pikes Creek Unit	South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area	Fish & Wildlife	Fish	South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area	1061.40	Bayfield	I-2E	Fee
	South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area	Fish & Wildlife			0.83			Easement
	Statewide Natural Area	NHC			40.00			Fee
South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area - Sioux River Unit	South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area	Fish & Wildlife	Fish	South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area	2432.86	Bayfield	I-2F	Fee
	South Shore Lake Superior Fish and Wildlife Area	Fish & Wildlife			26.45			Easement

Proposed Name	Existing Acquisition Authority/Name	Existing Administrative Owner	Proposed Administrative Owner	Proposed Redesignation (if Changed)	Acreage	County	Map Reference	Fee/Easement
St. Louis River State Habitat Area	Statewide Natural Area	NHC	TBD	State Habitat Area	35.80	Douglas	AJ	Easement
State Owned Islands - Bayfield County - Siskiwit Lake - Long Island	State Owned Islands	Forestry	Forestry		1.80	Bayfield	AG	Fee
State Owned Islands - Bayfield County - Siskiwit Lake - Round Island	State Owned Islands	Forestry	Forestry		2.00	Bayfield	AG	Fee
State Owned Islands - Bayfield County - Siskiwit Lake - Siskiwit Island	State Owned Islands	Forestry	Forestry		0.03	Bayfield	AG	Fee
Town of Morse State Habitat Area	Scattered Wildlife	Wildlife	Wildlife	State Habitat Area	720.00	Ashland	F-2	Fee
Town of Saxon State Habitat Area	Scattered Forest Lands	Wildlife	Wildlife	State Habitat Area	934.00	Iron	AF	Fee
Wisconsin Point Bird Sanctuary State Habitat Area	Statewide Natural Area	NHC	NHC	State Habitat Area	7.35	Douglas	AK	Fee

